Robert Forsythe Paul Nizan William B. Smith

NEW MASSES

JULY 27 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

John Strachey

Radicals in Rompers

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

LAST week we greeted the English-speaking troops of the Spanish loyalist armies with the news that good progress had been made toward supplying them with a steady flow of American magazines. This week we want to touch on another matter that is very important from the standpoint of maintenance of morale: physical comforts. Troops under this week's conditions of unremitting attack and counter-attack, with shells, bombs, and machine-gun fire constantly about their ears, find that life is something less than serene. Even armies as conscious of what they are about as the loyalists and their foreign anti-fascist comrades-in-arms find themselves under severe strain. Think what it would mean to put in a seventy-two hour stretch of ceaseless combat, and then to be moved back to the second line for a rest—only to be unable to have a smoke! As Dr. Edward Barsky reported at the Madison Square Garden rally for Spain Monday night, one of the minor successes of the Guadalajara victory was that the loyalists captured a quantity of Italian-made cigarettes left behind by the Blackshirts in their flight. Smokes for the Americans in Spain! The Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade are conducting a drive to send American cigarettes—and soap, and shaving kits, and other comforts. And the boys of the George Washington Battalion and the Canadian Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion will benefit too. The ad on the back cover of this week's issue tells the whole story. The NEW MASSES urges its readers everywhere to support this campaign to the full extent of their ability.

And while the Madison Square Garden rally, with Earl Browder, Norman Thomas, Congressman Jerry O'Connell of Montana, and others on the platform was marking in New York the anniversary of the outbreak of the fascist onslaught in Spain, friends of freedom in embattled China were doing likewise. A letter from Agnes Smedley dated June 13 has arrived from Yenanfu, which says, in part:

"All the articles in your magazine are being heavily used here by us. Many are translated and published, and now three men are using them, with other material, as a basis for articles for a special Spanish issue on July 18, the anniversary of the Spanish war. There will be a big mass meeting here on July 18 about Spain." And Miss Smedley enclosed a copy of the following cablegram to the Spanish Communist leaders:

"Dear Brothers: Your heroic struggle against German and Italian fascists and the traitor Franco continuously inspires the Chinese nation, especially every Red Army fighter and the masses of the Chinese Soviet regions. We, representing the Chinese Red Army, the peoples of the Soviet districts, and the people of the whole of China, pay you the most ardent brotherly tribute.

"The enemy of the Spanish people, and the enemy of the Chinese nation, is the same barbarous, brutal, robber clique. We must unite and coöperate more closely to annihilate this predatory robber gang.

"We earnestly hope for a deeper consolidation of your People's Front and a final and complete victory of your revolutionary war. We in China are striving for the establishment of an anti-Japanese national united front to hasten the preparations for a war of resistance against Japan. With this great anti-Japanese war, we are marching shoulder to shoulder with you.

"In the near future we confidently expect to see a glorious and free Spanish republic, and an independent, liberated Chinese democratic republic stand proudly side by side before the world.

"Long live free, independent Spain!

"Long live the solidarity of the Chinese nation and the Spanish people!

"Congress of Chinese Communist Party delegates from the Chinese Red Army and Soviet Districts.
"Yenanfu, North Shensi, China."

Who's Who

JOHN STRACHEY needs no introduction to American readers. He has long been a contributor to our pages, as well as to the enlightenment of the English-speaking world through such works as *The Coming Struggle for Power, The Nature of Capitalist Crisis,* and the recent *Theory and Practice of Socialism.* . . . William B. Smith, as previously noted, has just come back from a tour of the steel-strike areas. He also attended the National Labor Relations Board hearings on Ford's anti-union activities. . . . Paul Nizan is our regular Paris correspondent. Following a brilliant career as philosopher and historian, he turned to political journalism, in the course of which work he has functioned as one of the foreign editors of *L'Humanité,* organ of the French Communist Party. . . . Millen Brand is, of course, the author of the best-selling novel *The Outward Room.* Mr. Brand's views on the technical problems of the novelist handling social themes were published in a recent issue of this magazine. . . . Abel Plenn has lived in New Orleans and has made a study of American folk problems. . . . Bruce Minton was formerly labor editor of the NEW MASSES and is now on a leave of absence. The book of biographies of American labor leaders which he did in collaboration with John Stuart will come off the presses in about a fortnight, under the imprint of Modern Age Books., Inc. . . . The drawing by Deyo Jacobs on page 5 is from the publication of the Spanish trade-union organization U.G.T. As previously noted, Mr. Jacobs is a member of the Artists' Union who went to Spain to fight for the loyalists.

What's What

WE ARE pleased to be able to announce the following articles for early publication: (1) a penetrating disclosure of the present situation in Tammany Hall in terms of the New York mayoralty campaign, national political issues, by S. W. Gerson; (2) a detailed examination of the anti-labor practices of the Ford Motor Co., by William B. Smith; (3) a report on fascism in minor European powers, with special reference to Switzerland and Greece, by F. Elwyn Jones, author of *Hitler's Drive to the East;* (4) an exposé of the U. S. army's reactionary practices in the C.C.C. camps; (5) a critical study of Edna St. Vincent Millay's new book of verse, *Conversation at Midnight,* by Horace Gregory, poetry editor of the NEW MASSES.

Noticing the absence of any reference to our emergency drive in last week's issue, readers have asked us what the state of affairs is. The answer to their question is given on page 23 of this issue, which we hope everyone will read and take to heart.

That pleasant summer-season feature which we mentioned a couple of weeks ago, that of NEW MASSES speakers appearing at various resorts, will be continued this week-end. Theodore Draper, foreign editor of the NEW MASSES, will speak on "What Next in Palestine?" at Camp Nitgedaiget, Beacon, N. Y., and Harry Gannes, foreign editor of the *Daily Worker,* will speak under our auspices at Chesters' Zunbarg, Woodbourne, N. Y.

Editor Joseph Freeman and Business Manager George Willner are back at their desks after a three-week trip to the West Coast.

From time to time the NEW MASSES receives requests from various organizations for unwanted bound volumes or back numbers of this magazine. Readers who have such bound volumes or back numbers can send them to us with the assurance that they will be useful to trade unions and other such organizations.

By way of correction and addition: John Mackey's caricature in last week's issue was incorrectly captioned; it was not of China's General Sung, but of Japan's War Minister Sugiyama. And Rockwell Kent's woodcut on last week's cover, entitled "Workers of the World, Unite!" was one of a series made for the American College Society of Print Collectors.

Flashbacks

ONLY recently the French People's Front voted the fascist Doriot out of office. "Sit down," successfully ordered the helmsmen of French democracy, "you're Rocqueing the boat." And now the origin of this characteristic event turns up to be anniversaried. On July 27, 1934, Socialists, Communists, and Radical Socialists signed the Popular Front Pact. . . . Thirteen Seattle policemen, on July 28, 1917, refused to mount scab-operated street cars, saying they declined to provoke a riot. Next day, from the midst of one hundred and fifty fellow cops who had gathered to form a police union, these thirteen were singled out, arrested. . . . As the moribund A.F. of L. executive is curently absorbed in committing C.I.O.icide, it easily overlooks the sixtieth anniversary of one of America's most active weeks. At this time in July, 1877, the militance of a nation-wide railroad strike reached such heights as to send many dreaming of the third American revolution.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES
JULY 27, 1937

John Heliker

Radicals in Rompers

The mushroom growth of the army of socialist partisans, says a brilliant political economist, has resulted in reddening the rose

By John Strachey

UNEVENLY, with interruptions, but yet year by year, the general tension of the world situation grows. And as it grows, a steady and ever-broadening stream of men and women come over to the socialist position.

In many cases they come the whole way at once. This is an intoxicating experience. It is a double revelation. In a few months, sometimes in a few weeks, men and women who have hitherto been more or less blind and indifferent to what is happening to the world, outside their immediate sphere of personal interests, become conscious both of the peril in which everything which makes life worth living now stands, and of the way forward to a fuller and better life for themselves and for mankind.

Another category of people have long been conscious of the first part of this revelation. They have long seen and felt the gradual, uneven, and intermittent, but over the years inexorable, decay of the world in which we live. But they may only in the last few months, or even weeks, have seen the cause and the way out. It may be but yesterday that they caught a vision of the infinitely complex interconnections between an economic and social system which is ceasing to work and of the desperate and apparently irremediable ills of the present day. They may have only now realized, not merely intellectually, but with their whole beings, that particular economic and class relationships are producing this whole vast complex of social decay; that these relationships have only to be abolished, and more rational ones put in their places, for the dreadful symptoms of degeneration to disappear.

Even this half of the revelation is sufficiently intoxicating. It involves grasping, for the first time, that reforms in the present social order will not suffice; that what faces mankind today is one of those crucial changes of phase of which there have been only two or three in previous human history; that nothing less than this change of phase, this change of the very basis of the relations under which men coöperate to get their daily bread will suffice to save us. Thus, even if it is only this part of the socialist revelation which has been just grasped, a great mental revolution must have taken place.

For it is this side of the revelation which involves the rejection in principle of the whole political philosophy in which nearly everyone of us has been reared. That philosophy is in essence liberal. It is a political philosophy which rejects all these concepts of distinct phases in social development, and which, in particular, denies that a struggle between different classes in the community inescapably exists and is the one dynamic factor which can carry society forward from one phase to another.

If this political philosophy be rejected, we have to seek another. And the only alternative to it is that political philosophy which we call, after its founder, Marxism. But it is no light task for anyone to change the basic assumptions on which, whether consciously or unconsciously, they have hitherto guided all their actions. It is not to be expected that for some time after they have rejected the old one, they will be able fully to assimilate the new.

THUS IT COMES ABOUT, in any period like the present, that a considerable number of earnest and sincere men and women will begin to act on the basis of what they believe to be new views, but what are, in fact, painfully distorted or caricatured versions of these new views. There are at the moment, to come down to particulars, evident signs in Britain and America of the appearance of a tendency for which I know of no better name than "leftism." The essential characteristic of contemporary leftism is a refusal of all agreements or alliances between different sections

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of progressive opinion. The typical leftists believe that those who advocate, for example, a popular front, or working agreement, between liberals, Socialists and Communists must be less devoted than themselves to the cause of the abolition of capitalism.

I have not the faintest doubt of the passionate sincerity of nearly all of those who take this leftist point of view. They undoubtedly believe that they are the sole and chosen representatives of the great revolutionary tradition, the tradition of all the struggles of the oppressed in every age. They have seen, as we all have, the appalling consequences to the labor movement of a policy of concession and compromise. They sincerely believe that the policy of the unification of all the forces of progress, for example, means a capitulation to that disastrous tradition.

But in all this they are profoundly mistaken. A study of the works of Lenin, for example, (and his name is constantly used by them) could not fail to convince the leftists that they have, very naturally and understandably, but very profoundly, misconceived the nature of his teachings. (And no doubt all sincere leftists will one by one undertake that study and so convince themselves of the true situation.)

Running through the enormous corpus of Lenin's writings, as one of the principal threads, is a distinction between different kinds of compromise. Again and again we find Lenin rejecting the idea, constantly appearing then, as now, that it was inadmissible for scientific socialists to make agreements and compromises with liberals and progressives, and other non-socialist organizations. Lenin held, on the contrary, that such agreements often had to be made even when, as was the case in Russia, the liberals in question were unreliable allies in the common struggle against reaction. "Only those," Lenin wrote, "who have no self-reliance can fear to enter into temporary alliances even with unreliable people; not a single political party could exist without entering into such alliances." (*Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 40.) Indeed, Lenin was extremely severe on all those who seemed to want to be revolutionary for the sake of being revolutionary.

Scott Johnston

> We, the Social Demcorats, [he wrote] never can and never will put forward the slogan "be more revolutionary than everybody." [Parvus and Trotsky whom Lenin in this article unkindly calls "the windbag," had used this typically leftist phrase.] We shall not even try to keep pace with the revolutionariness of the democrat who is detached from his class basis, who flaunts phrases and who snatches at catching and cheap slogans (particularly in the agrarian sphere). On the contrary we shall always be extremely critical of such revolutionaries. . . . ("Social Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government," *Selected Works,* Vol. III, p. 34.)

Indeed, Lenin said definitely that if the situation required it "for the good of the cause, the proletariat will always support not only the vacillating petty bourgeoisie but even the big bourgeoisie." ("On Slogans," *Selected Works,* Vol. VI, p. 170.)

Finally, in a special article, devoted to the question and entitled "Compromises," Lenin makes it perfectly clear that in his view compromises may be necessary.

> The term compromise in politics implies the surrender of certain of one's demands, the renunciation of part of one's demands by agreement with another party. The usual idea of the man in the street regarding the Bolshevists, an idea fostered by the systematic calumnies of the press, is that the Bolshevists are opposed to all compromises, no matter with whom and under what circumstances. That idea is flattering to us as the party of the revolutionary proletariat, for it shows that even our enemies are obliged to admit our loyalty to the fundamental principles of socialism and the revolution. Nevertheless, the truth must be told: this idea does not correspond to the facts. Engels was right when in his criticism of the manifesto of the Blanquist Communists (1873) he ridiculed their declaration, "No compromise!" That is a mere phrase, he said, for compromises are often unavoidably forced upon a fighting party by circumstances, and it is absurd once and for all to refuse "to stop at intermediate stations." (*Selected Works,* Vol. IV, p. 208.)

Can we then lay down no general principle to differentiate the right type of agreement and compromise which it is necessary for Socialists and Communists to enter into and the wrong type of compromise and agreement, such as we in Britain, for example, continually entered into in the past, to our ruin? I think we may say this: those compromises and agreements may be not only permissible but are highly desirable, which are in the nature of open and fully conscious bargains between different parties, each of which, in the last analysis, will be found to represent the interest of different classes or subdivisions of classes. For such fully conscious and wholly above-board working alliances will leave the principles, the basic political philosophies of the socialist parties which enter into them intact. They are simply working agreements into which Socialist and Communist Parties enter because they know that in the immediate situation they cannot get all that they want. The other, wholly disastrous kind of compromise is when a Socialist or Communist Party waters down its basic principles, its guiding political philosophy, in order to attempt to make itself acceptable to, for example, possible liberal adherents. *For this type of compromise actually alters the nature of the Socialist or Communist Party which makes it.* It is not an open, fully conscious, working agreement between two parties in which each remains unchanged and which are based, in the case of the Socialist or Communist Party at any rate, just as firmly as ever on established principles of scientific socialism.

Such a compromise involves a modification of the working-class organization to suit the tastes of the middle-class or liberal recruits whom it hopes to attract. This kind of compromise, involving concessions in the field of basic political philosophy, is disastrous because in effect it means that the working-class party concerned ceases to exist as such; that it becomes, to the extent of the compromise, a mere appanage, a reflection of the liberal, middle-class organization with which it is dealing.

Now this is the type of compromise which the British Labor Party disastrously pursued during the past twenty years. Inevitably so, for the British Labor Party has never possessed a fully thought out political theory. Therefore, it was in no position to safeguard and consolidate its own position when it entered into the, in itself, indispensable business of coöperation with middle-class, liberal and progressive individuals and organizations. Instinctively feeling the insecurity of their own grasp of socialist principles, important sections of the British Labor Party have always bitterly opposed any kind of agreement with, for example, the Liberal Party. They have done so in circumstances in which a working-class socialist party which had really been sure of itself could, with undoubted benefit to the working-class cause, have entered into working agreements with the liberals. Instead, the Labor Party has refused all such open and avowed agreements with liberal organizations. Instead, it has more and more watered down its own socialist principles in the hope of incorporating liberals in its own organization.

In doing so the Labor Party has, I am afraid, made the worst of both worlds. It has been sectarian in its attitude to the middle-class liberal and progressive groups and organizations, and yet, on the other hand, it has so watered down its originally sufficiently vague socialist principles that it is now in acute danger of becoming a second-rate copy of those very liberal organizations with which it has refused to come to open agreements.

The only way to avoid this disastrous result is for socialists to become so sure of their principles, to become such masters of scientific socialism, that they will have absolutely no fear of, in the appropriate circumstances, working in the very closest coöperation with non-socialist individuals and organizations. For to paraphrase Lenin's words, only those who are sure of themselves dare work with those whom they are not sure of. But the only way we can become sure of ourselves is by far more serious and intensive study than almost anyone in the British or American working-class movements has ever dreamt of giving to political questions.

Moreover, this is the only way of establishing honest and reliable relationships with our potential allies in the liberal and progressive camp. For instance, I am quite sure that liberals would regard me, for example, with the utmost suspicion if I attempted to begin to water down the Marxist views which they know perfectly well that I hold, in the hope of deceiving them into working with me. I am quite sure that they will agree that the only possible basis upon which we can work together is for us both at the start to put our

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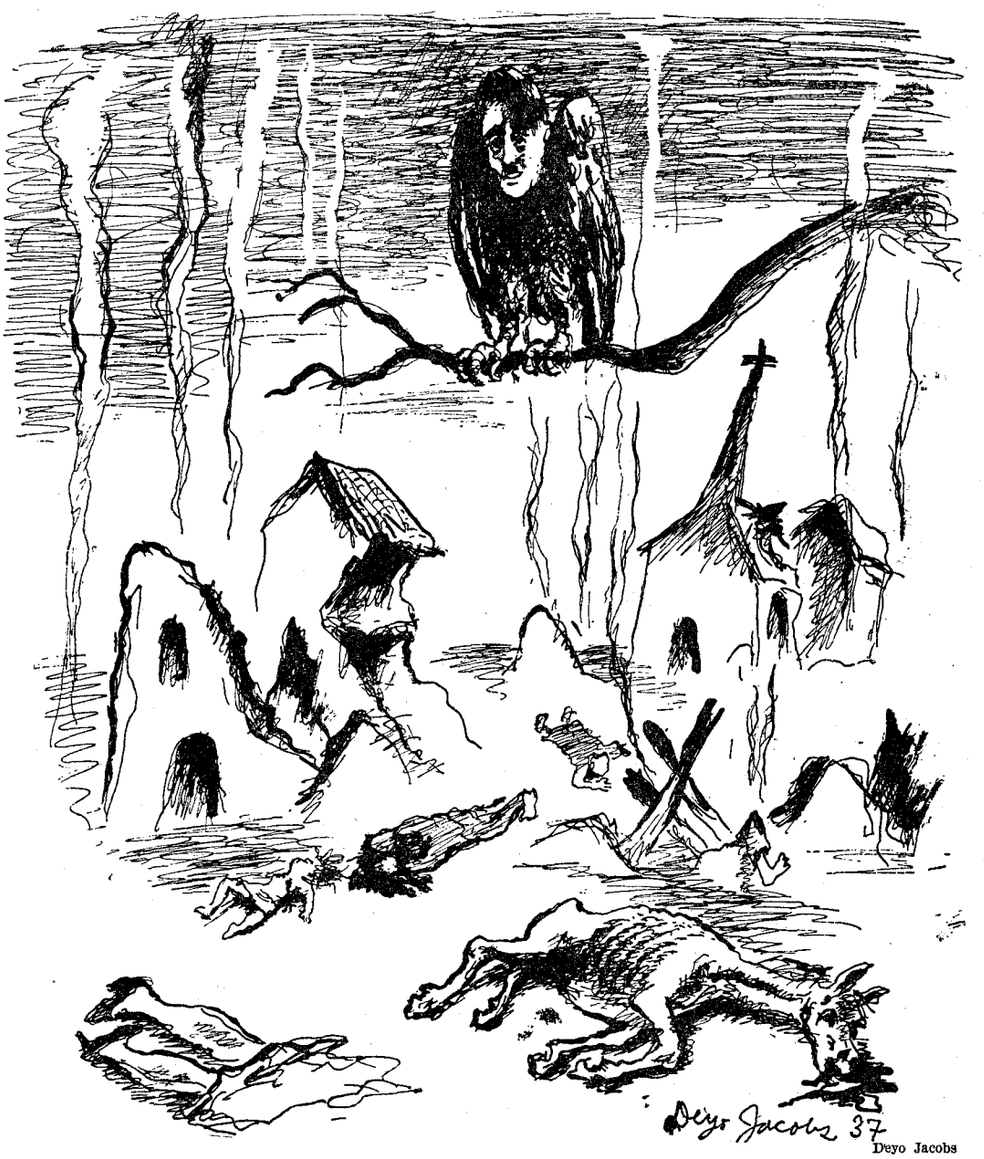
cards on the table, to define perfectly clearly where we differ, and then to draw up a working alliance designed to cover that immense field upon which, on the immediate practical issues which face us all in 1937, we heartily agree.

THUS the present rapid growth in the number of persons who have achieved a mastery of scientific socialism can actually carry dangers with it. Or rather, it can fail to have anything like the full effect which it ought to have in stimulating the general growth of progressive opinion; indeed, it can act for a time as a check on that growth. This disaster is indeed certain to occur if the men and women who have newly come to scientific socialism contract that most deadly of the diseases which afflict the politics of the left, the disease of sectarianism.

For if all those who have begun to master scientific socialism hive off and form a small exclusive sect, segregated from the mass of hungering, thirsting men, they may actually do much to prevent the building up of united popular forces. The more we study the history of the working-class movements of Western European countries, of Britain and of America, during the past half-century, the more disastrously important we shall be forced to consider the influence of sectarianism. I have recently been reading William Z. Foster's profoundly interesting autobiography, *From Bryan to Stalin*. He explains how large a part the profoundly sectarian traditions of the whole American Left played in delaying (and hitherto preventing) the growth of an adequately organized and integrated working-class movement.

What is it, we may ask, which appears to make Socialists and Communists so terribly prone to this deadly political disease? There is no doubt that the first predisposing factor, as the doctors say, is the above-mentioned intoxication, which very naturally affects people when they first begin to see the world situation in the blazing light shed on it by scientific socialist theory. But the sectarianism which this intoxication produces should pass away relatively quickly. Moreover, sectarianism, in Britain at any rate, has affected particularly badly groups and individuals whose acquaintance with scientific socialism is of the slightest. It may be that the cause of this deeper rooted sectarianism lies in the whole mental climate of Great Britain and America.

I trust that I shall not be misunderstood if I call this the religious tradition of thought. Now, for religious purposes the formation of small exclusive sects is clearly a natural procedure. The object of the persons who join one or another of these sects is to save their own souls. And for this special purpose contact with the rest of unredeemed humanity is not particularly important. (I am aware that this is the essentially Protestant, Calvinistic, Low Church, Evangelical religious tradition. But after all, this has been the dominant religious tradition of just those sections of the British and American peoples who have created the labor movement.) Now I believe that a large number of those who have achieved the socialist revelation (I purposely use a religious term) have reacted as if they had had a religious experience. They have unconsciously felt that by becoming socialists they had saved their own souls. But the object of socialism is not to save the souls of particular individuals, however estimable. It is to save human society and to carry it to a new and higher level of development. And this cannot be done if the socialists cut themselves off in any way from the rest of the population.



Deyo Jacobs

News Item: "Hitler Sees Goering's War Theories Proven by Guernica."

THIS DOES NOT MEAN that socialists do not need to organize themselves. On the contrary, it is one of the crowning principles of scientific socialism that for socialists an organization, which we call a political party, far more highly developed, closely knit, integrated, and capable of more manifold activities than any human organization hitherto seen is indispensable.

But socialists have to find the way to form such an organization without even tending to cut themselves off from the mass of the population; they have to find a way to make their organization, on the contrary, bring them into far closer touch with their fellow-men than ever before. This is obviously a most difficult double process, but it is one which can be and must be achieved.

It is only during the process of assimilating the principles of scientific socialism that the socialist will find his thoughts and language diverging from those of his non-socialist neighbors. During that awkward age of assimilation it is no doubt inevitable that we should stress the divergences between socialists and non-socialists. But once socialism as a science has been thoroughly mastered, then the time must come when the socialist goes back into the market-place enriched by what he has learned, but brought nearer to his fellow-men because he has achieved incomparably better understanding of the problems and troubles of contemporary humanity.

The mature socialist will not feel the slightest inclination to use a special terminology, appropriate and essential for scientific discussion amongst socialists, in his converse with his

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non-socialist friends and neighbors. He will be to the non-socialist merely someone who has obviously got a clearer and better hang of things in general, but who is faced with the same problems, knows the same difficulties, is fighting the same battle of life as everyone else. In the field of groups as in the field of individuals, the association or party which such socialists will have formed must so conduct itself that it again will seem to everyone merely as an association of those men and women who have managed to equip themselves most adequately for the common struggle.

It is perfectly true that this ideal position has not been reached by any political party in Britain or America, and by very few individual socialists or communists. But it is something which must be striven for ceaselessly. And it can only be even approximated if the old attitude of saving the individual soul by becoming a member of an exclusive sect is wholly abandoned. Our object is not to save souls, but to mass the maximum forces against the common enemy.

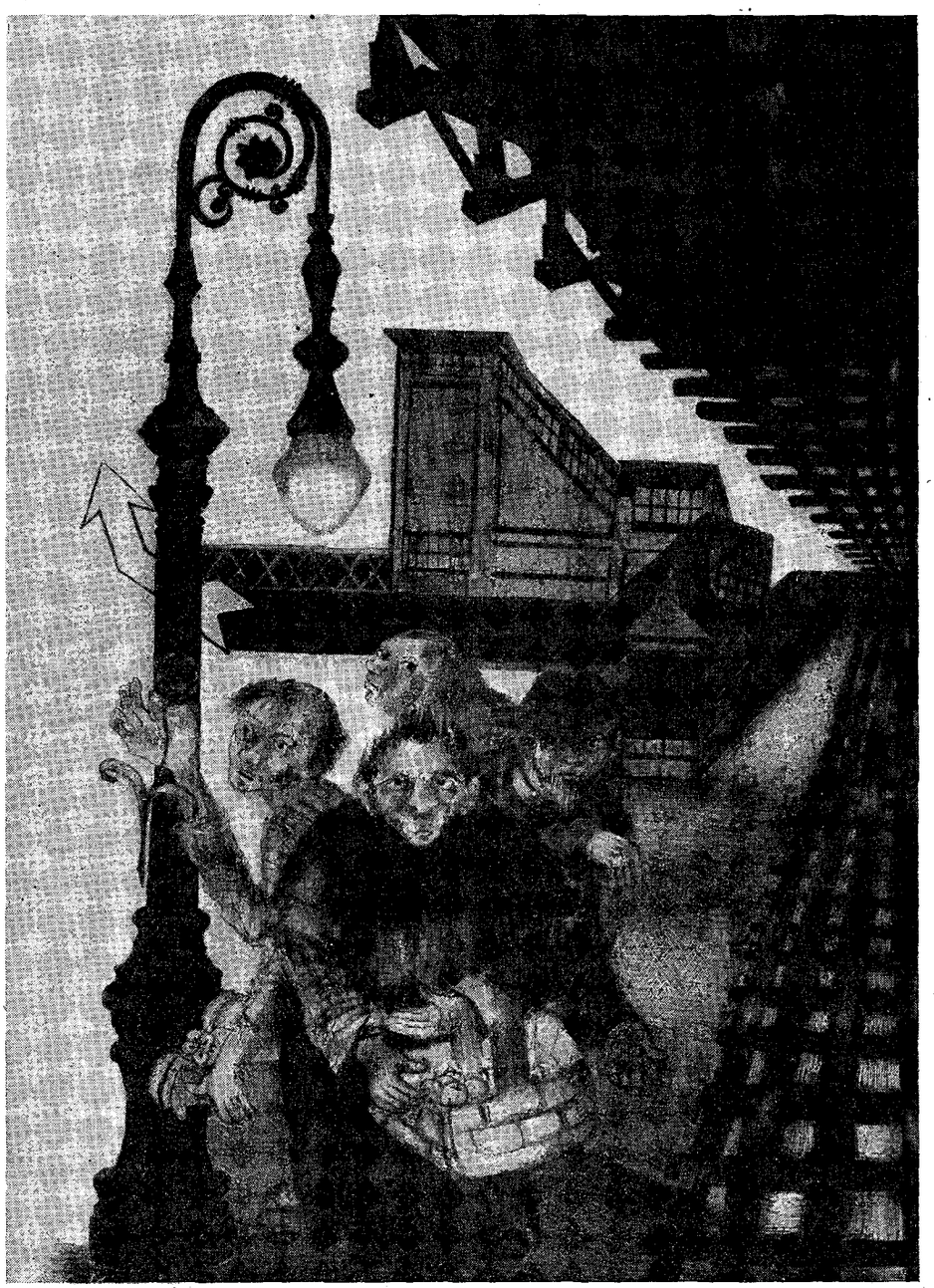
HOW TERRIBLE may be the consequences of leftism and the sectarianism of which it is the cause and the effect, we have recently witnessed in the case of the Spanish civil war. The rising led by the P.O.U.M., and a section of the Anarchists influenced by them, in Barcelona was a profound tragedy. By extreme good fortune it did not drench the whole of Catalonia in blood. If the two great mass organizations of Catalonian workers, the two great groups of trade unions, the National Workers' Confederation and the General Workers' Union had once become engaged in armed struggle, as they were within an ace of doing, it is hardly too much to say that nothing could have saved Spain from fascist conquest. As it is, the disunity of the Catalonian workers, which has hitherto kept this great province almost inactive during the ten long months of civil war and which culminated in the Barcelona rising, has done terrible harm to the republican cause. This has been, and still is, an essential factor in making Franco's continued progress possible.

What, we may ask, was the purpose of this at first sight incredible folly? It was a typical leftist purpose. It was an attempt, as it were, to snatch in one handful at everything which the Spanish workers desire. But in political, as in military struggles, one must not snatch at gains. A cool, clear-sighted weighing of the real situation, of the real consequences of victory and defeat in particular phases of the struggle is above all necessary. It can have been only failure to make any such careful study which induced the leftists of Catalonia to do what they did.

It is perfectly true that victory of the Spanish government will not in itself result in the establishment of a socialist commonwealth in Spain. Yet, who can doubt where power will lie if the Spanish government wins its still desperate struggle? A new army is being built up, manned and officered alike almost entirely by working-class or lower middle-class recruits, an army built on an exactly opposite plan to the old feudal Spanish army. Who can doubt that a state which has produced such an army is one for the establishment of which it is a hundred times worth while for every Spanish worker to fight?

The world situation is very critical. The forces making for the unity of the working-class movements on a policy of many-sided struggle against reaction, and the drawing to a united working-class movement of all the popular forces of the world are slowly but steadily gathering strength. But at the same time the forces both within and without the labor movements which are pledged to resist such unification are mobilizing, and they are very formidable. I believe that the decision of this historic issue largely depends on the ability of those who work for unity to avoid leftism. We in Britain and America are painfully backward in questions of [illegible]. But British and American workers are extremely quick to sense the peculiar and distinguishing psychological traits which are invariably associated with leftism. Nor is there anything which they dislike more than sectarianism. Not until those who have achieved a comprehension of scientific socialism have wholly freed themselves from this malady will it be possible to build up that great popular movement which alone can suffice.

We live through dark days. The forces of reaction are still pressing forward. The profound work of reëducation, or rather of self-reëducation, which we have all to undertake if we would fit ourselves as builders of that broad, deep movement of the people which alone can conquer the dark forces, must at all costs be pushed ahead more rapidly than ever before.



Lithograph by Ida Abelman (American Artists' Congress)

City Landscape With Figures

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Violence in Strikes

The events in steel and at Ford throw into the limelight the question of whether it is and should be labor's weapon

By William B. Smith

THE general public seems to believe that violence in labor disputes arises when workers break the law and the police power is called in to restore order. Most people pass judgments based upon the simple formula that labor, unable to get what it wants by rightful means, resorts to force. Such an approach overlooks or ignores the most obvious fact in our labor history, namely, that the moment labor goes outside the law, force and violence are automatically turned against the workers. Whether it be a single cop or an army, the police power is practically always on the side of employers.

It is obvious, then, that labor should never toss this boomerang which merely invites defeat and brings jail sentences, injuries, and death to workers. Today especially, with a ground-swell of favorable public opinion to ride upon, it seems incredible that labor should adopt such a hopeless tactic. Yet apparently the average person hasn't much doubt now that there is a distinct trend toward the use of violence by American workers. Misgivings that arose during the General Motors strike last winter have hardened to definite convictions in the weeks that the C.I.O. has waged its campaign for a signed contract with the independent steel companies.

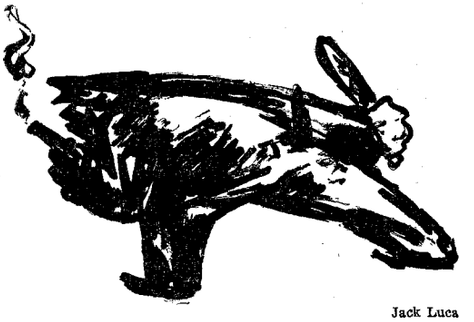
Yes, it seems incredible that labor should resort to violence, and it *is* incredible, as the facts in these recent labor disputes prove beyond a doubt. There has been violence—the list of workers killed and injured is still growing—but where and how did it originate? Certainly no effort has been spared to create the impression that strikers (and often their wives) were responsible. Press and pulpit, radio and public speeches have harped endlessly on the same theme.

It is high time, therefore, to examine in some detail both the actual events that culminated in violence and the way they were dressed up for public consumption. On May 31 the New York *Times* headlines read: "4 KILLED, 84 HURT AS STRIKERS FIGHT POLICE IN CHICAGO," and a sub-head added, "STEEL MOB HALTED." Weeks later, under persistent inquiry by a Senate committee, the truth came out. The camera eye had caught scenes of unspeakable police brutality and wanton murder committed during an attack on defenseless men and women. There was not the slightest show of force from labor's side. On the contrary, peaceful, law-abiding citizens were shot and clubbed without mercy and without reason. No moronic ax-slayer, no degenerate fiend could have surpassed the bloodthirsty relish of the Chicago police in quelling this "riot." But one riot doesn't make a steel strike—not so long as the Girdlers and Purnells can find devotees of "law and order" to do their dirty work for them. Youngstown, Beaver Falls, Massillon, Canton—every strike town has tasted violence of one sort or another. And steel workers have borne the blame.

With the Chicago massacre as Exhibit A, one feels tempted to dismiss all other similar charges against labor. Certainly, if that incident could be palmed off as an example of mob violence, there is no reason to suppose that other accounts of "labor troubles" are more accurate. Nevertheless, they should be carefully reviewed. The charge is so serious and so full of danger to democratic government that it must be answered fully and conclusively.

ON JUNE 10, Monroe, Mich., was the scene of another "battle" between steel workers and the law. The Republic plant at Monroe employs around 1350 persons. According to Harry Clark, president of the S.W.O.C. local, about 1150 are eligible for membership in the union, the others being in supervisory or white-collar positions. When the strike was called, the plant closed. It stayed closed for thirteen days while S.W.O.C. picket lines were maintained. There was no disorder and no violence during this period. C.I.O. men were overwhelmingly in the majority and the strikers presented a solid front. As president Clark put it, "That plant was down, and we weren't looking for trouble."

But trouble was brewing in Monroe. Mayor Daniel Knaggs, acting under pressure from assorted business interests, determined to break the strike. Since they could not order men back into the plants, these leading citizens tried persuasion. A "Steel Workers' Association" was formed and it became the nucleus of a back-to-work drive. When Mayor Knaggs announced that he would take a vote to see whether or not Republic employees wanted to to stay out, Clark proposed that a test vote be taken between the S.W.O.C. and the so-called independent union. Knaggs refused this offer and held his poll June 5. The C.I.O. did not participate, but the mayor declared that the results were overwhelmingly against the strike. With this phony verdict as a pretext, Knaggs insisted that the plant must open and set June 10 as the date. He warned S.W.O.C. pickets that violence would result if they tried to interfere.



Jack Luca

Monroe's normal police force was inadequate for the job the mayor had in mind, but this deficiency was easily corrected. Chief of Police Jesse Fisher began swearing in deputies and special police and soon had a small army ready. According to Harry Clark, vigilantes were brought in from all the surrounding country. American Legionnaires and members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars say their members took a leading part. It cost the city and county $9000 to stage Monroe's "riot."

The town got its first taste of violence a few hours before the real show commenced. Leonidas McDonald, Negro organizer for the C.I.O., was attacked by a mob in front of the post-office. While city police looked on, McDonald was knocked down repeatedly and chased through the streets. A good many in the crowd wanted to "take him to the river."

Governor Murphy had suggested that the opening of the plant be deferred, but the vigilantes had tasted blood and refused to wait. Though negotiations with the governor were still being carried on by long-distance telephone, Chief Fisher ordered his men to attack the picket line at six p.m. Seventy-five armed men from Republic joined the onslaught. In less than fifteen minutes tear-gas shells and bombs had driven two hundred pickets, including twenty women, from their posts, and Fisher's crew had smashed or shoved into the river sixteen cars belonging to strikers. Eight people received hospital treatment, the pickets' shelter was burned, and Monroe returned to "normalcy." However, this trim Michigan town has one sinister hangover. An organization known as the Emergency Shotgun Brigade is taking shape. Just in case there is any more trouble, this outfit plans to put six hundred men, all armed with shotguns or gas grenades, at the disposal of local officials.

GEORGE MIKE, crippled war veteran, was selling tickets to a C.I.O. dance the afternoon that "violence" broke out in Beaver Falls, Pa. Not a striker, George stood in the street that slopes down to the Moltrop Steel Products Co., watching the picket line. The plant had reopened that day, and strikers were trying to dissuade half a dozen scabs from going back to

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work. People were passing to and fro, and deputy sheriffs were on the scene when one of them, J. Jackston, leveled his gas gun and fired. The shell crushed George Mike's skull, and he died the following day. "Tell the world that the sheriff has washed his hands in blood," said a worker who witnessed the murder.

Strikers' wives supposedly "provoked" Youngstown's costly riot that took place just before Governor Davey ordered state troops into "disturbed areas." After an evening meeting of the S.W.O.C. Ladies' Auxiliary near Stop 5 on Poland Avenue, some two hundred women were gathered in the street and on the sidewalks. A few of them stopped to rest on company land before returning to their homes. This ground, a wide cinder-covered area stretching for blocks, was separated from the Republic mill by a high embankment and railroad tracks. None of the women had made a move toward the plant when Sheriff Elser's deputies ordered them off company property. Perhaps they had loitered in getting started, these women whose husbands had the courage to demand union recognition from a Tom Girdler.

Let's assume that they were slow in moving, as the sheriff asserted. Could any one imagine that they constituted a threat to law and order—women with babies in their arms and little children beside them? Yet the deputies picked that moment to pour gas shells and bombs into the crowd. Those women who could run scattered, but not before many of their men had rushed to the scene. News of this brutal attack spread fast among the workers. During the "riot" that followed, Republic's private police joined in with rifle fire from the plant. Two strikers were killed and thirty injured.

Led by a certain Major Curley (U.S.A. retired), police and deputies carried the war into enemy territory at Massillon the night of July 11. Strikers were gathered outside C.I.O. headquarters when a deputy yelled, "Let's bust it up." Tear gas and bullets followed. Fulgencio Calzada, Republic striker, was the first to die. Coroner Edward Reno reports that a bullet crashed through the *back* of Calzada's skull. Nick Valdoz lived a few hours after he was shot through the abdomen. A third victim was critically injured and five others received hospital treatment.

While deputies rounded up "suspects and trouble-makers" among the S.W.O.C. men, Major Curley's "army" laid siege to the two-story frame building where the C.I.O. office was located. Guns blazed and tear-gas shells rained into the building as deputized Republic foremen pressed the attack. Sixty additional city police soon graced the scene, armed with a machine gun, service revolvers, riot guns, and tear-gas guns, and bombs. Major Curley has not revealed how much of this equipment came from the Republic Steel Co. Nor has the Major established his official connection with the affair beyond saying that Chief of Police Stanley Switter had "named" him to aid during the steel walkout.

Harry Sternberg

Strikers were arrested wholesale as they left their headquarters. One hundred and forty-six were taken into custody, and the premises were raided. To top it off, Chief Switter forbade all picketing in the future.

No strike that brings men like Grace and Girdler into the picture would be complete without its quota of bombings and dynamite outrages laid at labor's door. The one serious instance so far, however, the blasting of two Johnstown watermains, has not produced a scrap of evidence that points to steel workers.

BEFORE CONTINUING the analysis of actual violence, it seems apropos to examine the record for cases of near-violence—instances where law and order were allegedly preserved through the timely arrival of sufficient police power. Pine Street, in Warren, O., was the scene of a labor holiday June 23. The sidewalks were lined with steel strikers watching a parade of men and women from twelve plants who had walked out in sympathy and protest—sympathy for the 5500 Warren men who wanted a signed contract with Girdler's company and protest against Judge Griffith's anti-labor injunction. The latter reduced picketing to a mere formality and paved the way for whatever strike-breaking tactics Republic might use.

When the decision was handed down, Warren strikers shook their heads, but it was not until Sheriff Roy Hardman announced that he would enforce it to the letter that popular indignation flared. Not only Republic men, but workers in other plants and industries realized that some kind of dirty deal was in the making. By noon, thousands had walked out and the number grew steadily.

"About one-thirty," said a young machinist, "I took a look around and our bunch was the only one still working. We hadn't had any orders, but we got out of there, too." His shop was "organized 100 percent," but no word had come from S.W.O.C. headquarters. That day, in twelve scattered shops, seven thousand workers and union officers made their own decisions.

Mid-afternoon found them coördinated and marching six abreast past the C.I.O. headquarters on Pine Street. Men and women drawn together by a mutual feeling of outrage filed by in an orderly and moving demonstration. One end of Pine Street leads directly to the Republic Steel works, and that afternoon the company elected to send some of its "loyal" men out of the plant. They came in automobiles, passing slowly through the line of march. There were murmurs and scattered shouts, but the parade split ranks and the cars kept going. Suddenly a young woman rushed out from the curb.

"Scabs, scabs!" she screamed at the first car. "They're starving the town! Take 'em out. Roll that car!" Some of the men tried to hold her back, but others took up the hysterical challenge and massed around the little sedan. The men inside it dripped sweat as the crowd closed in. A gray-shirted policeman was vainly trying to shove his way to the scab car when a union officer jumped on the running board.

"Let 'em go through, let 'em go!" his voice carried above the uproar and the tense earnestness in his face made the men near him hesitate. He called one or two by name, and they let go the car.

Another union man hopped up beside the first. "That's right, boys, take it easy!" he shouted.

As quickly as it had risen the tension dropped. Waved back by their leaders, the workers began chanting, "Let the damn scabs go." They made way, and the car started before a policeman could reach it.

Bitter hatred had blazed among that crowd. "Anything might have happened," people kept saying. But if there was near-violence, there was discipline, too. And these were not merely scabs riding home from the mill. To Warren strikers they represented the first stage of a wholesale betrayal by Sheriff Hardman. Until he set out to "enforce" Judge Griffith's injunction, the sheriff was considered fair, if not friendly, to the men on

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strike. That "enforcement" taught Warren workers a bitter lesson and fulfilled every suspicion they had felt when they stood back to "let the damn scabs go."

This aftermath deserves mention because it shows so clearly the sort of "legal" mechanism that is set in motion when labor dares to oppose the will of big corporations. The Republic mill at Warren was among those that were permitted to operate when Governor Davey proclaimed that the "status quo" would be maintained pending further action from Madame Perkins's Mediation Board. Warren workers knew exactly what the status quo should involve—no additions to the number of men at work in any struck plant.

Apparently "status quo" had a different meaning for Sheriff Hardman. By four o'clock that Wednesday afternoon five trucks had brought state troops to Pine and Walnut Streets. Behind fixed bayonets and tear-gas guns, "soldiers" cleared the area. While this went on, General Conelly discussed picketing and the status quo with union spokesmen. The general said plainly that any car carrying a sheriff's permit must be allowed into the plant. Asked if there would be any attempt to check the number of men who came out—since only that number could return under the status quo —General Conelly said that was up to the sheriff.

When union officials contacted Hardman's office they learned that the sheriff had already given out five hundred car permits to Republic foremen. Particularly at Warren, foremen had been active in spreading back-to-work propaganda. Between them, the sheriff and General Conelly gave these same foremen a free hand to fix the status quo. In other words, they could run in as many scabs and strike-breakers as they could round up. If the S.W.O.C. wanted to make trouble—well, General Conelly was there prepared to do his duty.

Despite their crass and brutal bias in favor of organized capital, these instances of "law enforcement" preserved a semblance of legality. Enough, it would seem, to inspire budding fascists and influence the general public. It remained for America's ace individualist, whose homely philosophy of thrift and hard work partly concealed his hatred for labor, to take the next and obvious step.

On May 26 the Ford Motor Co. dispensed with all legal amenities. Hearings in Detroit before the National Labor Relations Board have already shown that Ford "service" men attacked union organizers on public property. And witness after witness has testified that women who had gone to Miller Road in Dearborn to distribute literature for the Auto Workers' Union were kicked and beaten while local police stood by. The details are horrible, as the Reverend Raymond P. Sanford of Chicago proved when he told of seeing a woman who lay vomiting after she had been kicked in the stomach. Testimony on the near-murder of Richard Frankensteen and Walter Reuther was appalling.

But more important than the brutality of these assaults is their frankly criminal and fascist setting. From Harry Bennett, head of personnel, down to the cheap stooges who spy on workers in their homes or sabotage union men at work in the factory, this Service Department is manned by shady characters, gangsters, and thugs with prison records. Louis J. Colombo, Ford's attorney in the N.L.R.B. hearing, reeks of gangsterdom. And this is no coincidence. In his first big case, this lawyer, who looks like an insignificant Mussolini, got an acquittal in a very suspicious murder trial. Since then most of his legal career has been spent defending Detroit's underworld. Mr. Colombo seems thoroughly at home in the case he is handling at present, and the men who drift in for whispered conversations with him have the look of old clients.

A Wayne County grand jury has just indicted five of the "loyal" service men who were active on May 26. Sam Taylor, foundry foreman at River Rouge, is president of the notorious Knights of Dearborn. And it was he who ordered Christian Frey to "patrol the highways of Dearborn in the interest of the country [the U.S.A.], the community, and the Ford Motor Co." Sam led the crew of sluggers that attacked Reuther and his friends.

It is too early to guess how much effect the N.L.R.B. hearing will have on Bennett's reign of terror. At the least, it should weaken the grip of gangsterism in the Ford factory. And this will go far to open the way to collective bargaining for 89,000 harassed workers.

In the meantime, public opinion may revise its early estimates and place the blame for violence where it belongs—on the shoulders of fascist-minded employers and the venal police power that does their dirty work.

Ned Hilton

"I guess that taught 'em a lesson."

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Jacob Burck

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The Battle of Madrid

UNTIL the battle of Madrid comes to a close, all other considerations respecting Spain are secondary. The resources in men and machines thrown into a wide front by both sides dwarfs anything yet seen in the war. It is reported that the insurgents had 320 planes in the air at one time over half a dozen cities. As many as 200 planes are said to have clashed at once. The troops engaged number hundreds of thousands.

As we go to press, the loyalists appear to be more than holding their own, especially in that vital sector, the air. Although there seems little doubt that the rebels possess a substantial numerical superiority in planes, one loyalist plane seems to be the equal of as many as twenty rebel planes. Even if this ratio should sharply fall, victory in the air may decide the combat with forces so evenly matched in the field.

The loyalist command appears to have successfully executed an extraordinary strategic feat. The first phase of the battle to raise the siege of Madrid took the form of a loyalist offensive. A salient was pushed into rebel ground around Brunete. Then the rebel lines stiffened, and the loyalists entrenched. The second phase of the battle began with the rebels forced to launch a counter-offensive against the new loyalist positions. One of the commonplaces of modern warfare is that the advantage lies with the defense when both sides are fairly evenly matched. The loyalist command seems to have put the rebels into the unenviable position of having no alternative but to throw their best legions against a solid wall of gunfire.

Such large-scale warfare requires the most delicate coördination and planned preparation. That was impossible on the loyalist side before. The battle of Madrid is testimony to the fact that the new Negrín government has at last put the republican forces on an efficient, coördinated, effective basis. That is why it came into being, and it is richly justifying its existence. Let its critics account for that!

The last word must be for our American friends and comrades who have died in this battle. All reports agree that theirs was the hardest, most heroic duty, the work of the shock battalion. Those who have fallen will not go unremembered here. Those who fight on are now consecrated to them, too.

Who Is Saving for Whom?

THE most significant aspect of our national political life today is the speed with which reaction is reforming its ranks for a major trial of strength with the New Deal administration. On the face of it, the entire process is taking place within the Democratic Party. No wonder—the 1936 election left the Republicans preciously little with which to trade and maneuver. Their main emphasis has become to save the Democratic Party from itself—really, for the Republican Party. This strategy is getting its first work-out in the New York City mayoralty campaign.

What a paradoxical situation! Tammany, long king-pin of the local Democratic Party, used to consider the party organizations in the other boroughs merely its hinterland. Today, Tammany stands alone, tainted with Liberty League money and leadership. The Republican Party has been reduced to a point where there is no question about its independent role in the coming election. The choice for it lies between the progressive, Mayor LaGuardia, and the Tammany man. One wing of the Republican Party has declared for LaGuardia. The Republican bosses view this alternative with distinct disfavor and are negotiating for a "favorable" joint candidate with Tammany. The important thing is that, according to the Republican die-hards, the salvation of the Republican Party lies with the Tammany candidate. Party labels have come to mean so little that there is real enthusiasm for Senator Copeland in Republican circles.

The Tammany tiger is at bay because Mayor LaGuardia preëmpted the progressive vote through his support of the New Deal and his friendly relations with the labor movement. Traditionally corrupt and conservative to the core, Tammany has had no alternative but to turn its anti-New Deal face to the public in the persons of former Governor Smith and Senator Copeland. The New York election is important because it presages a similar alignment of forces on a national scale in 1940. The right wing of the Republican Party will look to the right wing of the Democratic Party for its salvation. Party will mean less than policy. And the farmer-labor movement will grow in proportion to the firmness with which it pushes its independent organization and the flexibility with which it handles the two old parties, now in the fluid condition inevitable during transition.

Can He Take It?

ALL this is evident, too, in the scramble for the late Senator Robinson's post as majority leader in the upper house as well as in Governor Lehman's startling letter to Senator Wagner in which he opposed the Roosevelt court reform simply "as a citizen." The death of Senator Robinson has unleashed antagonisms within the Democratic Party not unlike those existing in New York City. Governor Lehman's backsliding shows just how intense is the pressure from the right on the administration entourage, how critical the crisis within the Democratic Party has become, permitting of no fence-sitting.

Senator Robinson died like a politician and a soldier—in service. His very death was a political act. So great was the storm after his death that the President found it necessary to write his probable successor, Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky, that the court reform bill was still an administration "must." Now the reactionaries in both parties are saying that the Democratic Party died with Senator Robinson, that he alone was capable of holding both ends of the party together. The reason for this sudden martyrdom of the late majority leader is the well-known fact that Robinson was no enthusiast for the New Deal. He was a southern reactionary who steered the Roosevelt bills through the Senate purely for his own personal advancement, more lately for the sake of a Supreme Court appointment.

Governor Lehman's letter to Senator Wagner continues the recent procedure of making highly important political pronouncements through correspondence. It was rather

Louis Myers

Robinson—suddenly a martyr

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unexpected, coming as it did from one whose political fortunes have been so closely connected with the President. What it indicates is the catalytic nature of the court reform measures. They touch the upholders of the status quo on a most vital spot, and not even personal allegiance to the President is enough to prevent retrogression.

Reaction is turning the heat on to a maximum. Will Roosevelt shrink under the treatment?

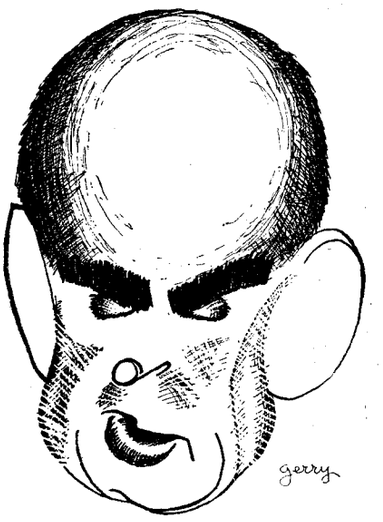
The Labor Scene

WHEN the Cincinnati convention of the A. F. of L. declared war on the C.I.O., the leaders of the convention automatically exposed the American labor movement to grave dangers. Since that day, as these perils loomed larger and larger, William Green has moved into closer and closer alignment with capital against labor as a whole. The struggle in steel found Mr. Green in a united front with Tom Girdler. While guardsmen, police, and deputies were pushing their drive against the steel workers, Green announced that the steel strike was lost. After expressing regret that "Thousands of workers were persuaded to sacrifice themselves as victims of ill-advised and untimely strikes," Green went on to explain the "defeat," stressing the "violent policies pursued by the C.I.O. in automobiles and steel during the past year."

Such a statement, closely paralleling the language of vigilantes and reactionaries everywhere, ranged its author squarely on the employers' side. And since the issues go far beyond the struggle between "little steel" and its workers, this dictum sounded doubly ominous. Coming at a time when organized business, reactionary members of Congress, and a hostile press are united in an effort to hamstring labor, this old-guard pronouncement was nothing but a strike-breaking act.

President Green implied a belated and somewhat half-hearted recognition of the common dangers facing American labor in a statement issued through the United Press. He put himself on record with: "The American Federation of Labor realizes the difficulties which are met locally when a strike is inaugurated by the Committee for Industrial Organization. Naturally workers regardless of organization affiliation are sympathetic to their fellow workmen who engage in a strike . . ." It remains to be seen whether Green means to hold to this or to tolerate repetitions of the truckers' strike in Philadelphia where the A. F. of L. leaders tied up the city for the sole reason of beating the C.I.O. to the draw.

More forthright was John L. Lewis's declaration to the United Press: "The C.I.O. has never opposed any strike on the part of the American Federation of Labor. It has coöperated everywhere. It is our policy to be friendly to other organizations and to assist and aid them in obtaining improvements in their wage structures and working conditions."



Gerry

Governor Lehman, "citizen"

Events at Alcoa, Tenn., should make it plain that capital does not hesitate to use the same reprehensible methods against the A. F. of L. as it does against the C.I.O.—when the A. F. of L. really means to fight in the interests of the workers. Almost the same day that he denounced the C.I.O., one of William Green's affiliated unions went out on strike against the Aluminum Co. of America. There was peaceful picketing by the workers and a bloody "riot" by the police. Two workers were killed and twenty-one wounded. A. F. of L. pickets got at Alcoa what C.I.O. pickets got at Johnstown and Chicago.

In Sheep's Clothing

MICHIGAN provides a concrete example of what to avoid in labor legislation. About three weeks ago, the state legislature passed a bill allegedly guaranteeing the right to collective bargaining, to strike and to organize. All these are already secured by the National Labor Relations Act, but such state-wide "little Wagner acts" are useful in enforcing the national measure.

On the pretext that the bill needed "safeguards for the right of picketing," several new provisions were slipped into it between the time of its submission to the legislature and the time of its adoption. As it now stands, Section 19 is the big joker in the measure. Far from safeguarding the right to picket, it actually abolishes that right. A very model of Mr. Hyde legislation under a Dr. Jekyll exterior, this section deserves to be quoted in full:

> For the purpose of this act, picketing is hereby declared to be lawful in this state except under the following conditions and circumstances: (a) Patrolling or attendance by any persons, whether in behalf of a labor organization or otherwise, at or near a place of business or employment affected by a labor dispute, or the residence of any person employed therein or other place where such persons may be, in such manner or numbers as to (1) obstruct or otherwise interfere with approach to or egress therefrom or (2) to interfere with the free and impeded use of a public highway; (b) Patrolling or picketing in or about any premises or place of business involved in a labor dispute by a person who is neither employed therein nor a party to the dispute nor an official of a labor organization that is a party to the dispute.

In essence, this provision makes picketing by workers before their own factories a practical impossibility, while it forbids outright any picketing by friends, wives or even officials of the union.

The Civil Liberties Union has declared that "the failure of the act to define practices and the wide power of the board to subpoena, investigate and prosecute workers and labor organizations, would inevitably lead to severe encroachment upon hard-won rights of labor." The United Automobile Workers of America has stated: "If this act were put into effect, Michigan would lead the country in anti-labor legislation."

And all in the name of the Wagner Act!

Leftward Ho!

REGARDED as a whole, the engineering profession has always seemed immune to anything that smacked of labor psychology. Before the depression, most engineers took their own special status for granted and either ignored the labor angle or identified themselves with the interests of their employers. Apparent economic advantages, rather than the nature of the tasks they performed, made this group generally indifferent or hostile to labor organization. And even the impact of a crisis that terminated many successful careers and forced thousands of engineers to accept jobs on public-relief projects has not fully conquered this old reserve. Nevertheless, there has been an unmistakable trend toward a realignment of sympathies. Engineers have joined other professional groups in ranging themselves squarely with labor. Gratifying evidence of this fact is seen in the rapid growth of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, & Technicians, which has recently received a C.I.O. charter as an international.

A partial explanation of this significant change is to be found in recent studies carried on by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. After observing that "A *written* con-

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tract of employment and pension privileges are two important criteria of economic security," the Bureau analyzes data supplied by more than 35,000 professional engineers who were employed in December 1934. Only 3169 were covered by a written contract, and of this number just 330 had terms lasting two years or longer. Moreover, contracts were most common in the field of education. Public-utility engineers, for instance, reported less than one hundred written contracts among 4183 employed! This lack of protection is all the more striking when unemployment figures for engineers are considered. At one time or another during the years 1930-34, over 35 percent of all graduates were without work—some for intervals of four years, the medium being just under twelve months. According to the bureau, about one-third of the engineers employed had pension privileges. Among those engaged in private enterprise the figure was 26.2 percent.

Although such data compare quite favorably with similar statistics for non-professional workers, it is evident that engineers are no longer warranted in holding aloof from the labor movement. Rather, this highly trained group will find its best interests served by active participation in what is really a common cause. And it is only through such coöperation that engineering techniques can contribute in full measure to an abundant life.

H.O.L.C. Blues

THE Home Owners Loan Corporation was set up in 1933 to save the small home-owner from the mortgagee. The record, however, shows that it succeeded only in salvaging the sour investments of the banks and building and loan companies. Now that this mission is done, the H.O.L.C. is in effect telling hundreds of thousands of families to "pay up or get out."

In 1933 big business found that the policy of wholesale evictions was a boomerang. The real estate market was glutted with small homes for which there were no buyers. Banks faced the bleak prospect of paying taxes with little hope of a return on their investment. At this point the newly-created H.O.L.C. offered to help the small home-owner, by lending him money to pay overdue mortgages, delinquent taxes and insurance premiums. Over a million families, most of them owning homes valued at $4000 to $6000, shifted their debts to the H.O.L.C. In most cases the borrower discovered that his debt to the H.O.L.C. was greater than the total of his former debts, and that the slight cut in interest made no appreciable difference. But he was at least able to postpone the day of reckoning.

The banks, on the other hand, received in return for these doubtful assets guaranteed United States government bonds, and their headaches were over. But now, the holders of H.O.L.C. mortgages are beginning to have headaches; and they are organizing to fight the new government-sanctified squeeze of the H.O.L.C. To date the H.O.L.C. has evicted 40,000 families and begun foreclosures on 60,000 more. New York State where five out of every six borrowers are behind in payments, has several H.O.L.C. organizations; the United Home Owners of Illinois has 20,000 members; in Wisconsin 13,000 were represented at a convention of the Home Loan Owners' Protective Association in May.

These organizations have forced legislation in Congress, of which the Copeland-Curley bill is the most inclusive. This measure would put a halt on foreclosures. The interest rate would be cut from the present 5 percent to 2½ percent, and the amortization rate of H.O.L.C. mortgages extended from fifteen years to thirty. Thus monthly payments ranging from $20 to $50, which the small home-owner is paying, would be cut in half (125,000 borrowers are over a year behind in their payments and another 225,000 are gradually slipping behind). The bill would provide for refinancing of home mortgages for the period of one year, giving people in danger of losing their homes a chance to turn to the H.O.L.C. for help. A fourth provision would eliminate personal and deficiency judgments on foreclosures.

The H.O.L.C. administration is fighting the bill by feeding the press propaganda that passage of the measure would mean a loss of billions of dollars to the government. As a matter of fact, the H.O.L.C. would show a profit if it would extend the amortization period from fifteen to thirty years because it would collect more interest on money loaned. H.O.L.C. policy is controlled by the reactionary Federal Home Loan Bank Board whose anti-Roosevelt officials are blocking one of the New Deal's original projects.

Below the Rio Grande

THE split which for two months has threatened to tear asunder Mexico's powerful labor movement is now practically healed, thanks to the prompt and unselfish efforts of the Communist Party of Mexico in correcting its errors, and subordinating every interest and complaint, however justified, to the cause of labor unity. The decision of the party at its plenum of June 26-28 to recognize the legality of the fourth National Council of the C.T.M. (Confederation of Mexican Workers), from which about half of the C.T.M.'s 700,000 members—including three national secretaries, two of whom are Communists—had withdrawn, will serve immeasurably to strengthen the mass support behind the progressive government of Lázaro Cárdenas at a moment when it again proves itself eminently worthy of such support and also very much in need of it.

That the government is steadily moving in an anti-imperialist direction was dramatically verified on June 24 when Cárdenas announced that, under the provisions of the Expropriation Law passed last November, the government would nationalize the misnamed National Railways of Mexico, the country's chief railroad network. While the government has owned a little more than half the stock, it is no secret that the company was actually controlled by a group of Wall Street bankers who held the bonds of the railroad debt. Now the debt will be considerably scaled down and form part of the general national debt, while the railroad will become government property, and, as President Cárdenas has promised, will be run by the railroad workers themselves.

At the same time, conservative and reactionary elements are feverishly plotting the destruction of the Cárdenas regime. Recently the most aggressive of these elements joined forces in a new political party demagogically named the Mexican Social-Democratic Party. Though it was soundly trounced in the congressional elections of July 4, this organization represents a constant threat to Mexican democracy. No greater obstacle at this moment can be placed in the path of fascism in Mexico than a reunited labor movement. It is fairly certain now that as a result of the action of the Communist Party, complete unity of the C.T.M. will be restored at the fifth National Council, scheduled to convene at the end of July.

From 1919 to 1937

WE consider John Strachey's article in this issue to be one of the most powerful to come from that penetrating mind. The situation which he discusses is not unique to our own times, but the current contamination with "leftism" among some of our home-spun intellectuals makes repetition of revolutionary fundamentals eternally necessary and timely. Back in 1919, Lenin himself dealt with the phenomenon of vacillation at critical times among the petty-bourgeoisie. In the eighth volume of Lenin's *Selected Works,* in his report to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) at the Eighth

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Party Congress (March 18, 1919), we read:

We shall be called upon to make very frequent changes in our line of conduct, which, to the casual observer, may appear strange and incomprehensible. "How is that?" he will say. "Yesterday you were making promises to the petty bourgeoisie, while today Dzerzhinsky [then head of the Cheka, Extraordinary Commission—ED.] announces that left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks will be placed against the wall. What an inconsistency!" Yes, it is inconsistent. But the petty-bourgeois democrats are themselves inconsistent in their conduct; they do not know what seat to occupy; they try to sit between two stools, skip from one to the other and fall now to the right, now to the left. We have changed our tactics towards them, and every time they turn towards us we say, "Welcome." We have not the slightest intention of expropriating the middle peasantry; we have not the slightest intention of applying force to the petty-bourgeois democrats. We say to them: "You are not a serious enemy. Our enemy is the bourgeoisie. But if you join forces with it, we shall be obliged to apply the measures of the proletarian dictatorship to you too."

America and the Chinese Crisis

"The storm center of the world has shifted . . . to China. Whoever understands that mighty empire has a key to world politics in the next five centuries."—John Hay, United States secretary of state, 1898-1905.

THAT was the opinion of one of America's greatest secretaries of state at the turn of the century. Even then, it was less prophecy than analysis. Today there is no element of prophecy in it all. The Far East is the main center of international antagonism in our epoch, and the events of each succeeding day make this plainer and plainer.

A war crisis, second to none, has been unfolding in the far-off north Chinese states of Hopei and Chahar. Japan is again on the march of conquest. By the flimsiest of pretexts, Japan seeks to annex these two rich provinces by creating puppet states. She has one ready-made in that region, the East Hopei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government embracing twenty-two counties in Hopei. Either through the enlargement of this "government" or the establishment of yet another, Japanese militarism seeks to add this large slice of North China to previous conquests in Manchuria and Jehol.

What do these names mean to the average American? We dare say, very little. China still plays a very inconspicuous role in the thinking of most of us. It is hard to break down the enormous distance intervening between us, the difference in traditions, the prejudice of "superiority." Yet break these down we must. World peace has suffered so many blows since Japan conquered Manchuria in 1931 that it can scarcely stand another one, much less in the very sphere where the interests of Great Britain, Japan, and the United States confront each other in the most naked form: colonies and spheres of influence.

What would follow if Japan succeeded in gaining control of Hopei and Chahar? A glance at the map is sufficient to answer this question. These two provinces adjoin Manchuria, but they are within the Great Wall, within China proper. Immediately to the northeast is the Mongolian People's Republic (Outer Mongolia), an independent state extremely sympathetic to the U.S.S.R. Immediately to the south is the very heart of China, the capital Nanking, the international center Shanghai.

Japanese conquest of these two provinces makes it but a matter of time (comparatively short, we fear) before further Japanese incursion would be made into the three remaining northern provinces, Shantung, to the south of Hopei, and Shansi and Shensi, to the east. The conquest of North China means that Japan has fulfilled the last precondition for the invasion of the Soviet Union. But that is not all. North China is the ideal taking-off point for Japanese invasion southward. Such a successful drive would signify the death-blow for China as a national entity.

The fortunes of China intimately affect this country. Where Japan moves in, all others move out. Economic monopoly follows political monopoly. The "Open Door" in China has been a recognized part of American foreign policy since John Hay formulated it in 1900. In essence, the Open Door would forbid the exclusive economic exploitation of China by any one power or by any combination against the rest. There is no need to ascribe altruism to the founders of this doctrine. It was good self-interest. And from the standpoint of American imperialism it still is. For friends of freedom, however, its importance today is that Chinese territorial integrity and independence are, in the present circumstances, inextricably linked with it.

This cornerstone of American Far Eastern policy was accepted by all the interested great powers by the Nine Power Treaty of 1922. The signatories, including Japan, guaranteed the territorial integrity and independence of China. Not only did the Japanese invasion of Manchuria violate this treaty, but it also broke the Pact of Paris (the Kellogg-Briand Pact) of 1929 whereby the signatories agreed to renounce war as an instrument of national policy in relation to one another and to condemn war as a s[illegible] tion of international controversies. This pact was invoked by Secretary of State Stimson at the time of the Manchurian crisis, but it solved nothing because of Britain's reluctance to break an understanding with Japan.

Japan is a law-breaker, a promise-breaker who must be brought to the bar of international justice by the collective action of the powers who mean to maintain peace. The United States, however, in its unhappy haste indirectly to aid Franco in the first days of the Spanish crisis has tied its hands in this Far Eastern crisis. The Neutrality Act has just this effect. It does not discriminate between the aggressor and his victim and thus discriminates against the weaker, less self-sufficient power. There is good reason to believe that the passage of this measure cleared the way for Japan's present invasion. Four months ago, the *China Weekly Review*, published in Shanghai and generally considered the foremost spokesman for American interests in the Far East, declared in a leading editorial: "Japan would have declared war on somebody long before now had the military clique in that country felt perfectly sure the United States would have remained neutral."

There are intimations from Washington that the neutrality legislation is undergoing reconsideration on this very basis. Not alone China but Spain and every embattled democracy would benefit by a correction of this measure. It is of some significance that the Japanese press greeted Secretary Hull's statement—which mentioned no names but upheld the sanctity of agreements—as "moderate." So long as the neutrality measure stands, and criticisms are made only in a most abstract and implied fashion, the Japanese imperialists feel there is no danger of effective American action.

A great responsibility rests with the government and the people of the United States. This responsibility has been well stated by the letter to Secretary of State Hull from four progressive Congressmen, Jerry J. O'Connell of Montana, John M. Coffee and Knute Hill of Washington, and John T. Bernard of Minnesota. Their statement held that the time had come "when our government must boldly insist that the treaties to which it is a party must be honored." They insist that an official warning from the United States would give pause to Japan. And they conclude:

"The American people have a traditional sympathy with the desire of the Chinese people for democratic self-government, free from foreign molestation. Today the Chinese Republic is rising to new dignity along the path of internal peace and democracy."

All this is now threatened by Japan.

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From Blum to Chautemps

The serious problems which caused the cabinet change are still short of the solution which must come soon—and the People's Front stands solid

By Paul Nizan

THE FALL of the Blum cabinet at the end of June was the kind of "accident" that everyone had expected. For days on end, the Senate had stood firm against the financial measures asked by Vincent Auriol, minister of finance, and Léon Blum. The final day came. Or rather the final night. Towards ten o'clock, the floor was packed, as were the galleries. Many provincial "ladies" came—the Senate is the great assembly of the French provinces. Abel Gardey, the reporter for the finance committee, walked to the speaker's platform. His speech, clipped and hard, was an attack on the government. Vincent Auriol followed him. His speech was that of a minister gone down to defeat; he spoke of his virtue, which no one questioned. Then Léon Blum spoke, spoke well, with calculated insolence against the Senators. His speech heralded his resignation. Joseph Caillaux, chairman of the finance committee, closed the series of addresses. Caillaux is an old man whom the years have drained of color; he has the gestures of a puppet and the voice of a cruel old woman. From time to time, in the unbroken silence, his monocle dropped from his eye, clattering on the wood of the speaker's stand. The vote came—against Blum. The session adjourned.

During the night, autos sped towards the Hotel Matignon which houses the offices of the premier. It is an old, eighteenth-century mansion with a delightful garden. In the cellars, shelters have been constructed two stories deep for protection against air bombs and poison gas. You never can tell—there may be a war, revolution. . . . In the courtyard the newspapermen wait. They have been waiting there for hours and hours, exchanging chilly witticisms. About two o'clock in the morning the leaders of the groups in the parliamentary majority arrive: Radicals, Socialists, Independent Lefts, Socialist and Republican Unionists, Communists. A little later, the two Communist delegates, Jacques Duclos, vice-president of the Chamber of Deputies, and Marcel Gitton, vice-chairman of the army committee, leave the mansion. Duclos declares: "We have advised resistance. The government has no grounds for resigning."

Somewhat later, on the stone steps of the Matignon, the resignation of the cabinet is announced. The reporters enter Léon Blum's office. He reads the cabinet *communiqué*. The end has come. The premier of the People's Front has surrendered. The autos now speed towards the Elysée palace to see President Albert Lebrun. Madame Vincent Auriol, wearing a broad-brimmed, black hat from one of the better stores, drives her husband. Chautemps took the wheel of his car himself. He forgot to release the brake, and the car would not move. The approach of power was making the minister of state nervous.

Premier Chautemps

Scott Johnston

Ex-Premier Blum

In the Faubourg St. Honoré, it is four o'clock in the morning. The ministers who had resigned leave the presidential palace. Immediately afterward the president of the Senate arrived, and consultations began. The president of the Senate, a bearded, little old man, has not slept a wink. . . .

What had happened? Premier Blum had given in to a planned offensive of the banks and big capital, with the Senate acting, in part, as their tool. Blum need not have quit. The full powers he had asked had been accorded him by the Chamber of Deputies; there had been no breach in the majority of the lower house. The Communists had counseled resistance. Yet Léon Blum surrendered. He was worn out by the exercise of power which he had not dared to use as he might have. There had been too many retreats, vacillations, defections.

Yet there was no question of a change in the government. The intact majority in the Chamber forced the president of the republic to commission someone from the same parties to succeed Blum. He chose Camille Chautemps, a Radical who is noted for his affection for compromises. There would, therefore, be a second People's-Front cabinet under Radical leadership, following on the heels of the People's-Front cabinet under Socialist leadership. The Socialist leaders, who had eyes only for the attacks upon the Blum government and could not see the shortcomings, raised the slogan, "Blum to power!" There was reason to fear that the Socialist National Council might refuse to participate in the new government, thereby breaking the People's Front. Léon Blum with difficulty persuaded his followers to support the Radical cabinet which was being formed.

The Communists announced their readiness to support this cabinet, but did not deem it a correct policy to demand, jointly with the Socialists, the return to power of men who had permitted themselves to be squeezed out of office despite the formal expression of contrary opinion by the Communists.

Chautemps formed his cabinet, announcing that it would remain loyal to the People's Front. On the whole, the cabinet was composed of the same men. Thus there is now a Radical and Socialist government, supported without restrictions by the Communists, provided that it remains faithful to the program of the People's Front, and supported with evident unwillingness by the Socialists who are still mulling over the defeat of Léon Blum.

THE ENTIRE SITUATION is dominated by the state of the treasury and by the foreign outlook.

When Georges Bonnet took over the finance portfolio after he left his position of ambassador to Washington, there were only twenty million francs left in the treasury. The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, therefore, voted the full powers required by the urgent situation. The first measure taken with this

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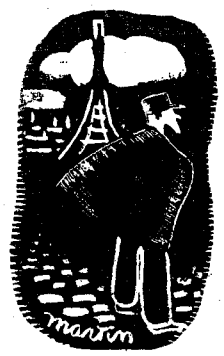
power was to raise the "ceiling" on advances of the Bank of France to the treasury; this was a form of inflation. There was the "unhooking" of the franc, which was freed from the gold standard and left "to float." Other measures followed, new direct and indirect taxes. These financial measures are calculated primarily on the desire for a "liberal" economy, in order not to frighten capital-holders. It is still hoped that, without use of forceful measures, capital-holdings which were exiled from France by their owners may be persuaded to return.

These measures, which are a burden upon the French people, are not a final solution of the financial problem. "Unhooking" the franc and increasing taxes simply furnish temporary resources which may last until the end of the year, but will not permanently restore French finances. Sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, the difficulties will rise again, and then it will be necessary to look the problem square in the face, as only the Communists have done.



Martin

The truth of the matter is that the structure of the French budget, as it was established more than a century ago by the politicians of the restoration period, corresponds neither to the structure nor to the requirements of the modern state. The real problem is that of reforming the budget. Resources can be found, provided budgetary allotments are modified and tax provisions reformed. The only effective measure will be a profound reform of the budget, the creation of a genuinely democratic tax system. There can be no doubt whatever that this profound reform will meet with violent capitalist opposition. But, as I have already remarked, once the extraordinary resources have been exhausted, the problem will simply have to be faced squarely. Then, if the actual achievements won by the People's Front are to be retained, and if the program of the People's Front is still to be carried out, the concrete propositions of the Communists will have to be taken into consideration.

It is no mere chance that, several days before the fall of Léon Blum, the Communists declared that they were ready to assume the responsibility of taking part in the government of France. France is now having a breathing spell. Once it is over, the major problems will again present themselves in their totality.

There remains the extremely grave foreign situation, for it is absolutely clear that German and Italian intervention in Spain constitutes a direct threat to the French Pyrenees frontier as well as to communications between the French mainland and North Africa. The realization of this seems to be growing, even in circles where Franco enjoys the most active sympathy. Indeed, it appears—and Blum has so stated—that the realization of this situation prevented the Socialists from venting all their spleen on the Chautemps government as they had hoped to do at first.

The national congress of the Socialist Party will open in Marseilles in a few days. It is certain that the powerful provincial federations will launch a violent attack against the participation of Socialist ministers in the Chautemps government. But it is almost as certain that Léon Blum will be able to carry his point and will get the majority of the congress to accept participation. [This analysis has, according to press reports, been borne out by the results of the congress—ED.]

Hence we are not moving towards an immediate government crisis unless there is a sudden turn in events, which no one seems to expect. Besides, throughout the land, the People's Front remains in extraordinarily solid formation; the by-elections have proven this solidity. The very same day that Léon Blum fell, the fascist leader Jacques Doriot was crushed by the People's Front in the elections at St. Denis. His defeat is typical of the situation in the entire country. Even in the colonies the People's Front is making progress. In Dakar, a People's-Front slate was elected. In Algiers, eleven native councilmen were elected by a majority of a thousand votes over a reactionary slate.

The masses of voters and trade unionists are maintaining their firm unity. This alliance remains the decisive factor in French political life.

★ ★ ★

The Labor Process

"What I did," said Marx, "was to prove"
One) that the existence and war of the classes
Springs from the means of production
Further) that class war brings on of itself
The dictatorship of the proletariat
Last) (and without repetition)
This dictatorship dies, is the end of the classes.

But the labor process—
Consider the labor process apart
From its particular form under particular social conditions.
What distinguishes any worker from the best of the bees
Is that the worker builds a cell in his head before he
constructs it in wax.
The labor process ends in the creation of a thing,
Which when the process began
Already lived as the worker's image.
And he realizes his own purpose
To which he gives up his will.
Nor does he give it up to the crick of a second
But the less attractive he finds the work in itself,
The less it frees him body and mind—
The more is his care glued to the grind.

Spins and the product is his web
And he can't catch fish in waters where there are none.
Not used . . . is cotton wasted.
Must seize on these things
Must rouse them from their "death-like" sleep.
Bathed in the fire of labor
Brought into contact with living labor
Things animated, consumed, but consumed for a purpose
In which living labor is itself consumed.

By the green water's oil
The air circles the wild flower; the men
Skirt along the skyscraper street and carry weights
Heavier than themselves;
By the rotted piers where sunk slime feeds the lily-pads,
Not earth's end.
The machines shattering invisibles
And which wrecked the still life
Precede the singling out; the setting up of things
Uphold the wrist's force; and
The blood in the ear
Direction of the verticle
rigidly bound to the head, the
accelerated motion
of rotation of the head
Under the head's hair.
Socony will not always sign off on this air.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY.

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Absent With Leave

History will hardly record the squealings and squeakings of those who scurry in terror from a ship that is riding high

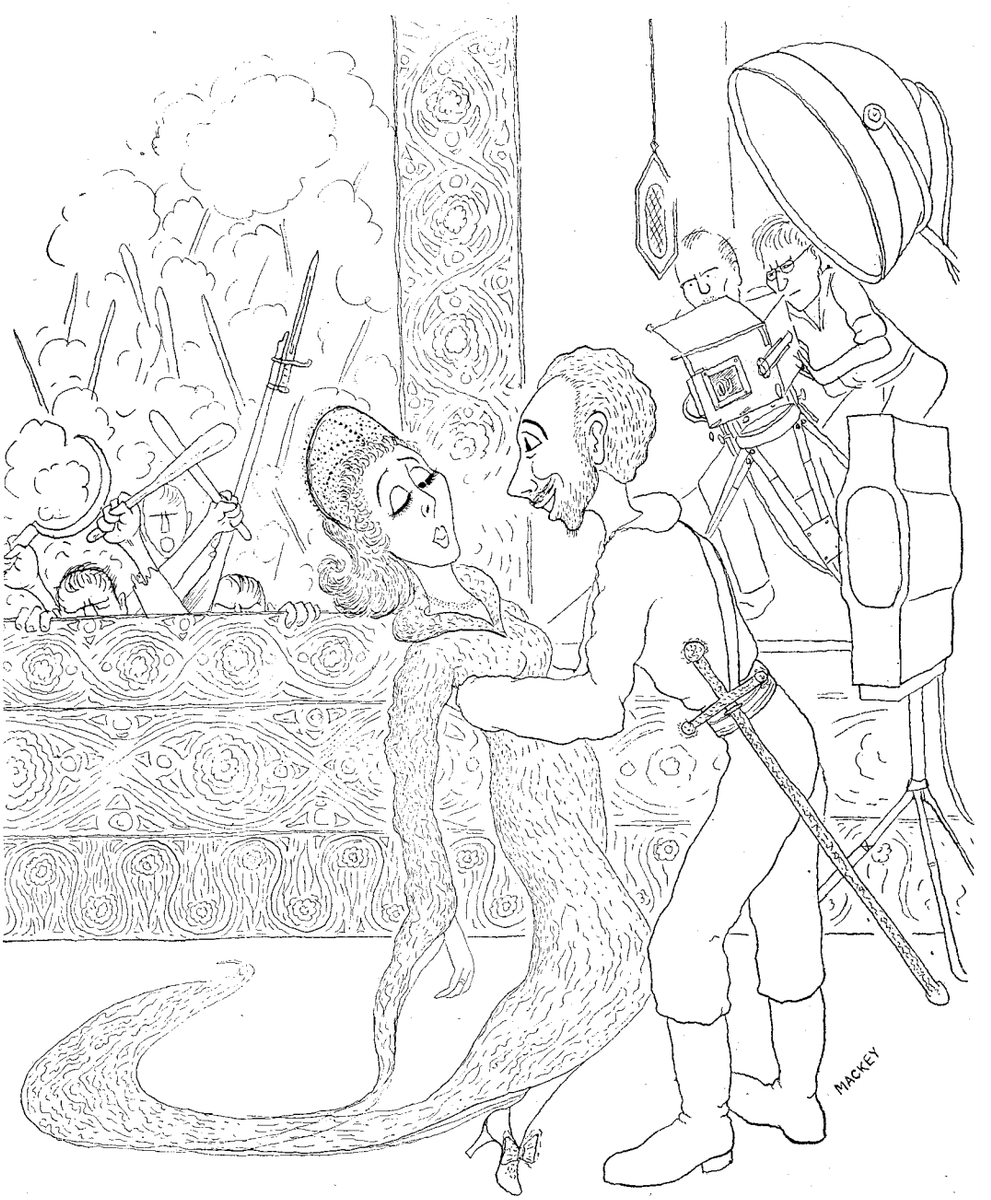
By Robert Forsythe

THE scurrying of the little folk has reached a point in Lilliputian fury which has become embarrassing as well as humorous. They come cluttering down the gangplank; they shinny along the guy ropes; they leap in desperation from deck to dock; their faces have that apprehensive look to the rear and the shamed look forward which characterizes men who are eager for departure but not proud of their rapidity of movement. As they depart the ship, the attentive observer may hear faint little cries of distress which may be distinguished as *Tukhachevsky . . . betrayal . . . revolution. . . .*

The admirers of Marshal Tukhachevsky must reach well into the millions in the confines outside the U.S.S.R., in those intellectual circles where the revolutionary fervor is such that nothing less than the pure, fine essence of violent action will satisfy the scribblers. It is difficult to understand the admiration for a mere soldier, but M. Tukhachevsky seems to have been something unutterably special in the way of military geniuses. The disappointment of the British Foreign Office when the marshal was unavoidably absent from the coronation could be compared only with the consternation of the higher officers of the German Reichswehr when he passed on after a session with his peers.

As I look back over the years, it seems to me that there has never been a time when intellectuals were not grieving over the Soviet Union. Under any system of logic, it would be possible to agree that it would be better if Russia were a socialist paradise, but I am convinced that no ordinary paradise would ever please the intelligentsia. The very suggestion of a paradise would prove that dullness had triumphed over irrationality and that art was doomed. The Bolshevik revolution in 1917 frightened the living soul out of most of the liberals of that period, and they melted away in streams broad enough to challenge the Volga. Since then there has been a succession of coy advances followed by precipitate retreats every time a brakeman on the Minsk branch was slow in turning a switch. The first Five Year Plan brought head-shakings and withdrawals; the collectivization of the farms saw a retreat from Moscow in the grand Napoleonic manner. The murder of Kirov was a signal not for regrets about Kirov but for appeals for the safety of the murderers.

If I seem to have scorn for intellectuals, consider it so. They learn not, neither do they spin. But, God, how they lament! It would have been far nicer if the fascists had withheld their world offensive, but I beg leave to doubt that the prompt reaction in the Soviet Union is as pleasing to the Nazis as the weeping of some liberals would have us believe. It requires the conservatives to point out the truth in such matters. When Wickham Steed writes in the New York *Times* that the execution of the Soviet generals created consternation in the German high command and possibly nipped an armed offensive which would have left both Russia and Germany at the mercy of the military, he is obviously speaking from the vantage point of his close friendship with the British Foreign Office and with the political leaders of the continent [see editorial, "More on Tukhachevsky," issue of July 20—ED.] It was also noticeable that the general European impression that the executions showed a lack of morale in the Red Army was not shared in Poland, whence much of the intrigue has sprung. A modest dispatch from Warsaw during that period (also in the *Times*) pointed out with not too great pleasure that the facts undoubtedly meant just the opposite. They



John Mackey

"Kiss me, my queen, and I'll call off the revolution."

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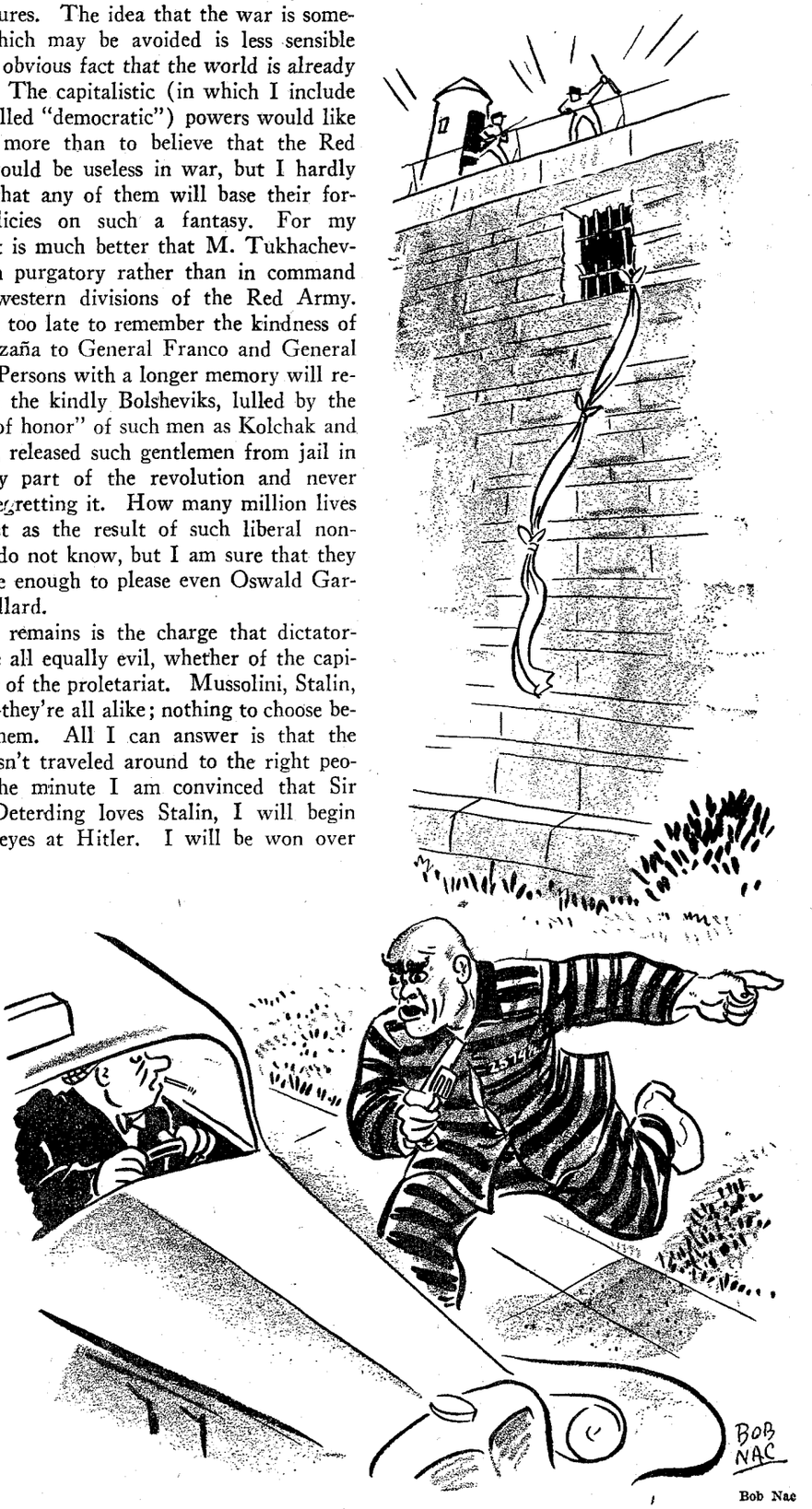
meant that the government was much stronger as a result of the departure of the beloved Tukhachevsky and his compatriots, and that, if anything, there had been a decided setback for the enemies without.

THE TRUTH, as pointed out by Mr. Darcy recently in these pages [issue of July 13—ED.] is that Russia is surrounded by enemies who have been driven to desperation by their own failures. The idea that the war is something which may be avoided is less sensible than the obvious fact that the world is already at war. The capitalistic (in which I include the so-called "democratic") powers would like nothing more than to believe that the Red Army would be useless in war, but I hardly believe that any of them will base their foreign policies on such a fantasy. For my money it is much better that M. Tukhachevsky is in purgatory rather than in command of the western divisions of the Red Army. It is not too late to remember the kindness of Señor Azaña to General Franco and General Mola. Persons with a longer memory will recall that the kindly Bolsheviks, lulled by the "words of honor" of such men as Kolchak and Denikin, released such gentlemen from jail in the early part of the revolution and never ceased regretting it. How many million lives were lost as the result of such liberal nonsense, I do not know, but I am sure that they would be enough to please even Oswald Garrison Villard.

What remains is the charge that dictatorships are all equally evil, whether of the capitalists or of the proletariat. Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler—they're all alike; nothing to choose between them. All I can answer is that the news hasn't traveled around to the right people. The minute I am convinced that Sir Henri Deterding loves Stalin, I will begin making eyes at Hitler. I will be won over to the theory of similarity the instant Lord Rothermere has a kind word to say about the Soviet Union. The very moment Pierre du Pont sends in a contribution to the NEW MASSES, I will retract every unkind word I have ever written about the Duce. With all respect for the liberal intellectual, the reactionary is less stupid. He knows what dictatorships he prefers; he knows whether or not they are all alike. If he can be so sure, I contend we can be equally certain.



Bob Nae

"Quick! Ford Service Department!"

In the course of any barrage against the Soviet Union, it is always well to hang on and wait before breaking into screams. If it were a question of a single crisis, the attitude of some intellectuals would be more comprehensible, but they seem to grasp any excuse to be shocked and horrified. Experience should have shown them that it is never safe to sell Russia short. Just when it seems that industry has broken down entirely, one will note in a paragraph tucked away in a dispatch from Moscow that car-loadings are now between 90,000 and 100,000 a day, which is far beyond the average of several years ago. Since the wreckers had been most active on the railroads, this would seem to mean that the recent reports about the demoralization of the railroad workers were something less than complete.

IT MAY BE cynicism or it may be the beginning of common sense, but I find that reports such as Harold Denny recently sent to the *Times* from Moscow bother me very little. What we have thought in the past about the Soviet Union has swayed it almost not at all, and I hardly believe that our worries now will make a difference. While I was in the middle of writing this, confirmation of this began to show up in the dispatches of the gentleman who had been so agitated, Mr. Denny himself. His first impression was that attendance at a Moscow party in these parlous days was like a Fourth of July celebration in an arsenal. Two weeks later he is writing that the reception given by Mr. Litvinov for Mr. Sandler of Sweden is as gay as anything Russia has ever known. In the same issue of the New York *Times* is a dispatch from a correspondent of the London *Times* saying that the Soviet government has been greatly strengthened by snuffing out the wreckers before they could get into action. To all of which I say: ho-hum. It is all such old stuff. On Wednesday Russia is ruined, and on Saturday it has never been better.

The Soviet Union is *not* in ruin, and the Red Army is not something that foreign powers will go around slapping for pleasure. There are troubles in the world, and Russia is not immune to them, but the very fact of outbreaks in that section is in reality an indication of the frenzy of desperation elsewhere. Because they are afraid to attempt a frontal attack upon the Soviet Union, the fascist powers have been seeking to provoke an uprising from within the borders of the U.S.S.R. They have failed in it as thoroughly as they will fail when they finally attack the Soviets directly.

History will one day record with interest the strange reasoning of a period which regarded the defeat of a fascist conspiracy as an indication of demoralization on the part of its conquerors. Of the company of scurrying little folk who miss no opportunity of getting off the ship, history will say nothing, not thinking it worth while.

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Sheep on the River

The hot, coaxing smell of meat on the stove was a postlude to starvation but almost a prelude to another kind of hell

By Ida Faye Sachs

PA lowered his head against the early morning sun and sniffed at the yellow stains on the newspapers that covered the table.

"What's the good of drippings without bread?" he boomed in the good-natured way that generally caught ma's ire.

She sat down with the baby, a line of soot bordering her nose, her long sharp jaw and ragged hair leaning out in hateful answer.

"I get so tired of listenin' to you. I can't tell you how it deafens me," she said.

"All right," he replied sternly, "can't I cast the blame on my own head if I want? Did I say you was to blame we haven't got it, for gosh sakes? So help me," he added, looking with pitiful appeal over to Sid as if to remind him of their secret understanding against ma, "I never seen a longer, nastier tongue 'n hers. Tell the truth, I'd as soon get my teeth knocked in as be rammed so much with her rotten temper." His squatty big shoulders nudged against his shirt, and his red face pointed to the black crack in the boards, tried and helpless-looking in self-pity.

She pushed her fingers into the corn meal, drew her lips down in distaste, then took a mouthful that showed up gritty and pale with her wide, heavy chewing.

"Yeh, you'd as soon," she sneered. "Well, I'd as soon die as put up much longer with what I got to put up with."

Pa sighed. It was a sigh that shook like a bundle of leaves. He looked at the empty pan, glued on the edges with what was left of the meal, then leaned back with his chin up and idleness all over his face.

"At least," he pronounced as in a dream, "you can't say I didn't make to try, Clary. In all that's right you can't begrudge me that," he said winningly. Ma poked at Sid to go on with his eating.

"Oh, what the stinkin' hell's the good of it," she said quietly, a worn grief in her eyes. "Nothin' kin budge you. You'll always be sittin' on your rump full of good excuses."

"Why not?" said pa, unruffled. "God knows I been tryin' every other thing."

"Sure," she said. "Jest leave it to me. Let me go on to my grave tryin' to keep us all goin'. Jest alive and that's all. Nothin' more nor less. You jest stay on your behind and let me do the rest."

"You must be a smart one," he said smiling at her.

"I'm a smart one," she said, in a drawn-out groan. "And the pains'll be killin' what little strength there's in me. It's a life to be livin', somethin' pretty fine and decent," she said. "Sure. I don't deserve no better than that. Like somethin' holy you kin give thanks to God about it," she choked to herself.

"Maybe I'll whistle," he said. "Maybe it'll come dancin' to you."

Ma took a long digging breath and turned to the baby, making automatic little stirs with her fingers against his face. Then his gray watery eyes opened, and ma's hand crept down below her throat and lifted out her breast that was long and yellow and empty-looking like an old flower dead from the sun. The baby sucked blindly, his fists hard against her. Little Ellie crawled under the table, cramming her mouth full of the coffee grounds and dead ants that happened to cross her way. Pa watched the baby as if the baby were air. Sid gazed through the rusty screen window of the shack down to the river. There was no sound except for the gurgling panic of the baby at ma's breast.

SID LOOKED OUT, pleased that pa could still hold his own against ma, for pa's idleness, that she hated so, to him meant a definite power. It was through pa's roaming idleness, he remembered thankfully, that he had been saved for two years from being locked up in school. And it was pa's way of trying things that shifted them back and forth and back again, from the dry gray plains down to the valleys, then up to this red mountain dust where there might be work in the fields or the canneries or the mill, making each day count and color up in his mind. And now it was the river and the flimsy bugs skittling over the rocks and pa naming for him the animals and birds, an exciting certainty to last as long as pa hiked now and then the thirteen miles down to the mill to see what was doing, as long as there lived in pa the will not to grieve.

He looked up, startled. Ma, gasping and creaking her chair, yanked her breast away from the baby, pulled her dress into place, muttering to herself, and put the baby back in the apple crate.

"Say, it looked like there was somethin' there all right," pa said calmly.

"What do you know?" she cried, outraged. "What do you talk for when you don't know nothin'?"

Then Sid gave a cry and pointed to a sheep on the opposite bank of the river. Ma dropped her fury and flew to watch it. His father, careening out of meditation, pressed against the screen and stumbled out of the door. Clary's rangy legs bounded toward the stove and ran out, her long feet now madly alive to cover the spaces between her and pa.

Sid stood by the window. He could see the sheep's blunted head looking up in elegant inquiry at pa's rushing toward it, then as politely turning to ma, who was hurrying over the narrow crossing of boulders to the other side.

"Corner it," howled pa. He snatched the rope from ma and took a step toward the niche where the sheep stood.

Ma retreated toward the crossing, her body bent over a rock.

"Stay where you are," pa howled again. She nodded. The sheep swerved its head, sniffed, and all at once sent its stiff legs flying in terror into the thick woods beyond the bank. The two of them shot up with the swiftness of light after it. For a little while all three stayed out of sight while Sid waited. He could hear, out of the tormented quiet of the river, the mingling sounds of hoofs and leaves and their hurrying feet. Then suddenly, ma's sharp sides appeared above a shoulder of rock, her face tense and wary. There was a throaty moan. Pa sprang out of the shadows, his red hair gleaming from the rock light, then began stealthily moving toward a thick hedge of bushes below near ma. She backed precariously toward the stream, nodding at him. Sid heard a crackling break of twigs from inside the bushes. The sheep, all dirty whiteness, rose out of the leaves and turned to face pa. Slowly, its eyes dully staring, it moved with the calmness of a cloud, to find footing on the stony ledge nearby. Pa threw the rope several times, landing it on trees, on rock. The sheep, knowing and quiet, stood watching. Then again pa hurled it. This time a light twisted cry came out of the sheep. With a lift of its hind end it bolted through air and away.

Hot-footed and gasping, pa and ma ran together. Sid strained to the screen. Without sound of words they climbed over the bleached round stones, scrambled into the bushes, out onto the rocks again. Then the two of them, pursuit somehow binding them close, disappeared into the trees. Sid waited a little longer, and idly poked at the swill burning in the stove. There was no doubt, he thought, that pa would catch it. Not because of ma with him, but because of pa's nature alone. Complacently he returned to the screen and saw that ma was running ahead over the crossing, and that behind her was pa, leading the sheep on the rope. Sid went to the maple tree near the door. Silently they walked through the dust up

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to the shack. Their faces were sweaty and red; their bodies slouched together, carelessly slow, in new partnership.

Ma heard the baby crying and stood still awhile, digging a hand into her forehead.

"Got your breath, kid?" said pa, panting and walking in circles.

Ma went to the door, pushing the hair from her face.

"It's the kinda weather, if you want to know it," she said, "I can't endure no more."

Pa winked at Sid and made a double harness of rope before he tied the sheep to the tree. The sheep flexed its neck, nibbled the leaves, and with a last thought of escape made crazy turns around the tree, getting itself tangled in the rope.

Pa said it had strayed from a flock. In its straying or running from ma and pa it had torn a deep gash in its side, a dark redness that was buried deep in its dirty skin.

"Here."

Pa held to its nose a handful of leaves. The sheep gave a disdaining tug at the rope and ran as far as it could, shaking the tree, and staring around in a recaptured wildness.

Ma came out with the old rusty ax in her hands, that pa had found on the premises.

"Now I expect you're gonna leave me to do the butcherin'," she said.

Pa pulled the sheep over, dragged Sid's hand down to touch its wool and pressed leaves into its flat, turned-in lips. "I figgered on findin' out whose it is, then we'd get cash for that," he said. "This way, it's what you call a felony, if it belongs to somebody else."

Ma came closer with the ax, her face convulsed, her shoulders trembling. She let out a cry straight into pa's face. "I got my heart set on it. I got my whole life banked on it," she cried. "Here you got meat for a week like it dropped from the sky. Here all you kin do is open your big mouth about it." She burst into angry weeping, pulling at the rope, furiously trying to pull the sheep away from pa's hold.

Then Sid started in. He ran over to pa, then back to her, begging them both not to kill it so soon. It was learning so well to stay near the tree, to eat from pa's hands, he pleaded, running between them frantically. Pa shoved Sid away, giving ma his whole consideration.

"All right, if you got your heart set on it, I'll butcher it then," he said.

"Oh, leave it stay a little longer," begged Sid once again.

Pa gave him a shove that sent him falling to the ground.

"Quit your bawlin'," he mocked. "If you don't want to watch, go hide under the stove."

Ma cleared the old pine stump and ran with crazy joy to help pa untie the sheep.

"Roast today. Stew tomorrow and the next day cold," she was screaming delightedly. "God knows what all if the blow-flies don't get it."

Sid put his hands to his eyes, and on hearing the scraping sound of the sheep being dragged to the stump, ran inside. He could hear ma wheedling pa to hurry, and pa, in conspiracy, testing the ax on the stump and laughing loudly over the struggling sounds of the sheep. Then he heard a quick bony crash and a thin curdling noise. He had to cry. He had to cry that pa was so quick to ma's bidding.

"There," ma was saying. Pa said nothing, but went on making more sounds with the ax.

Ma came in smiling, blood all over her dress and hands. She put her hands to soak in a can of water, and after they were free of blood, went out with a heavy laughing look on her face to pa. They started counting the chunks of meat in low voices, and ma with the blood still running down her dress onto her shoes, rushed in with a huge piece she set in a pan and put on the stove.

Pa cleared the mess from the stump and hung the meat on the tree by the screen window. Ma sent Sid down the road for twigs and rubbish to keep the fire going, while pa busied himself far down behind the trees burying the hide.

The hot coaxing smell of meat on the stove pushed into the corners of the shack, made the air dense, rushing with promise. Sid waited by the screen. Pa hurried his steps to ma's bidding, answered her easily in obedience.

"Betcha he's still thinkin' of that there mutton," pa said when they sat down at the table, giving ma a wink.

The two ate with a wildness. They clawed the tough brown meat. They stuffed their mouths, chewed, swallowed, patted their bellies in pleasure.

"Hurry, eat," said ma, with her bulging dripping mouth.

"I'm eatin'," whined Sid.

With great effort he was eating slowly. He wanted to keep his pleasure cool, private, instead of having it spread lawless and greasy all over his face, as it was doing to them. He could feel his separation from pa grow as pa went on eating, as ma gnawed in haste to match her hunger with pa's. Pa was no longer to be set apart, loved for his idleness. Now together, with their fat racing jaws, the brown grease on their lips, their eyes wild and roving with secret, they were bound against him—all because of the sheep. Pa's lazy powerful life crawled, went on crawling to ma's keeping because that thing had sought to wander here, to nuzzle its dirty fleece among the bushes.

"I'm what they call a transient. That's why, I figger," spoke pa, "they won't take me down at the mill."

"Well, go down tomorrow and see again." Ma groaned sweetly over the new slices of meat pa put on her plate. "If not," she went on, "there's always the hop season. Much as I kin hardly endure it, me weanin' the baby, there's hops."

"Sure," he returned. "We kin take our time while the meat holds out, then start movin' like we done before."

"Pray the blow-flies don't get it," she said.

"Anyhow them lumber trucks should be shovin' down to the valley for winter supplies before long," he said. "Then it won't be the walkin' like it was the last time."

They talked more about it, and out of the new content of their bodies sounded a future of goodness meant for themselves and no one else's interference. Pa was hacking off another hunk of meat for himself when they heard a car far off come down the road. Ma ran to the door and said it was the sheriff's car she'd once seen outside the Centro courthouse. Pa gulped fast, his hand over his mouth, then walked slowly, idly out to the road. Ma sat down again, took a few slow bites of her meat and stared at pa's plate.

"Go see. Hurry an' tell me what it is," she choked out at last to Sid.

THE ROAD made a sharp turn, and ahead stood pa, his shoulders still, his eyes grave and unmoving on the car standing a little away from him. In the car, the fat puffy face of the sheriff returned pa's look, and behind the sheriff, the small, unquiet eyes of a little man who twisted in his seat, turned sharply from the trees to the sky, then down the road to the roof of the shack where a ribbon of smoke hung lifeless and blue in the air.

"No, I didn't see nothin', nothin' at all," said pa. The rattling voice of the little man bore down on him.

"I'm tellin' you," he said, "it's three more I'm missin'. Listen, partner, if you ain't tellin' the truth, they'll be hell poppin' here and it'll pop, I promise."

Sid stayed in the shadow, saw pa lift his head and breathe in the dust from the car with slow deliberation.

"There's thirty mile of river bank between here and Centro to find your goddam sheep in. So find 'em," he said.

"All right, you know it," said the sheriff. "You know, well as me, if you ain't tellin' the truth, you'll be arrested and tried, and you won't get no mercy. Got a feller locked up now for rustlin' which sure ain't no different from this."

Pa kept his eyes on the steering wheel.

"I'm swearin' I didn't see it," he said gravely.

The sheriff growled to the little man, then the car backed into the turn, and sped up and on to the pavement of the highway.

Pa remained stock-still, listening to the fading sound of the car. When it had gone, he clutched his sides and his shoulders started shaking.

"Hey, pa," whispered Sid. Pa turned a face as cold and as unloving as stone and walked down the road to the shack.

"Come on," he called back, all of a sudden. "Come on, kid, we ain't through eatin' yet."

Sid didn't move. He stood looking at where pa had been, a loving pity welling up within him.

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READERS' FORUM

Life in the Spanish loyalist trenches—And trade unionism in the Deep South

● It seems as if all the anti-fascists in the world have come here for a finish fight. I was staggered when I first learned the extent of the movement. I've even seen a Chinese here. For many it was not simply a matter of traveling to get here. In the French train were two Germans who had just escaped from a concentration camp. They beat it to the coast, got a rowboat, and rowed to France through the open sea. There were six or seven Austrians who came through France. More had started with them, but some had been shot down at the Austrian border. I've found out from a German comrade that Hitler has trained some excellent soldiers for the People's Front; Germans are coming here right after the end of their army-service terms.

If anyone had any doubt as to the wishes of the Spanish people in this war, the doubts couldn't stand up against what we saw on the train ride coming in.

As the troop train went by, every peasant in the fields stopped working to raise his fist in greeting; at the railroad station they clustered around, shouting "No pasaran!" and "Salud!" At one place a bunch of kids came down with their teachers, singing the "International."

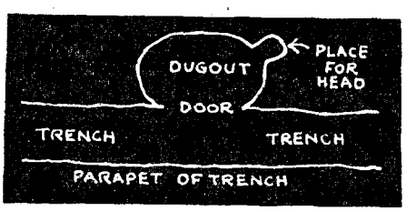
We got off for lunch at Barcelona in the "Carlos Marx" house—a building four stories high on a full square block. Barcelona is strongly Anarchist, as evidenced by the large number of red-and-black flags. But, although our column was preceded by a hammer-and-sickle banner with the words "Brigade Internacionale," that made no difference as far as the enthusiasm of the people went. Here, as everywhere in Spain, the clenched fist is the universal greeting.

We entered Valencia in the early morning, while it was still dark. There were no lights and it was somewhat eerie marching through a large city that seemed to be deserted. There were some refugees here, sleeping in the streets, as they had no other place to go. At times in the dark we would hear a soft "Salud!" It was getting light by the time we returned to the train. It was here that I first saw refugees. Refugees don't look like other people, somehow. There was an expression in the faces of these people who had been driven from their homes that cannot be described. I don't like to think of it—people living in empty cars at the railroad station. . . .

I am sitting in an olive grove, which would be a beautiful place if there were not trenches dug through it in various directions. The last couple of days have been quiet—only an occasional rifle shot or burst of machine-gun fire. This is what you get when neither side can make an advance against the other for the time being. However, the stalemate right now is all to our advantage. In the last couple of weeks, the International Brigade, of which our American Lincoln Battalion is a part, has made a big advance and we are now in a strong position. We have the fascists opposing us encircled on three sides, with a river on the fourth side. We hope to wipe them out within a few days.

We are given to understand that the military situation is very favorable to us. The new conscript army which the Spanish government is raising should be ready for a big push within a few weeks. The fascists seem to be getting short of both man-power and material. Their man-power, moreover, is very unreliable. I haven't seen it yet myself, but I have been told that the Moors and other mercenaries have gotten pretty tired and are likely to give way before a determined attack. The fascists also have within their ranks many conscious anti-fascists who have been forced into their army. Just a couple of days ago a Communist Party member came over to our own lines, bringing nine others with him.

Perhaps you would like to hear about my home. For the past week I had been sleeping in a ditch about a half-mile from the front, as part of the reserves. This wasn't so good, since one was exposed to the weather quite badly. A blanket spread over the top of the ditch was only a slight help. But now I am much better off. This is my third day in the front lines. When I got here I found that the dugout assigned to me was a hole cut into the side of the trench away from the enemy. The hole had an opening about eighteen inches wide, after which came the dugout proper, with dimensions of about four by three feet and high enough for me to be able to sit up. I have improved this by digging out a corner into which I can place my head when I sleep. By a little ingenuity I can make myself quite comfortable. I drape a blanket over the opening when I sleep, so I am protected from both rain and cold. Here is a drawing of the place, viewed from the top except that my dugout is not open at the top:



And by the way, who was the s.o.b. who invented the phrase "sunny Spain"? It's rained for four days out of the last week. Rain is one thing when you're in New York and another in this proletarian army where you have only the clothes you wear and you wear them till they're worn out—the fact that clothing is wet doesn't mean it's worn out, except on rare occasions.

For the last couple of days the food has been much better than usual, although it has usually been of fair quality. The reason for the improvement is the discovery that a Chinese comrade who was doing tolerably well as a machine-gunner was a first-class chef. He protested, but he now works as a chef, since we have plenty of machine-gunners.

A couple of nights ago the fascists put on some loudspeaker propaganda for our lines. They spoke in French, and warned us to give up in five minutes "or else." They attacked after five minutes, but got nowhere. The next night we put up a loudspeaker for some propaganda of our own. I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw this loudspeaker. We christened it the "street-corner speaker's nightmare." It came in two parts, each carried on a big truck. The first truck carried the electrical apparatus and an armor-protected room for the speakers. The second truck carried the horn, which was about twenty feet long and six feet wide at the mouth. It would do pretty well for Union Square gatherings.

PAUL.

Marantz

Terror in Louisiana

● Reuben Cole, an organizer for the Farmers' Union, had been walking through several southern Louisiana parishes visiting locals and interviewing members in regard to complaints growing from failure to receive A.A.A. and soil conservation checks. A large number of letters had been received at the state headquarters of the union in New Orleans from members of the strong Weyanoke and Tunica locals near the Mississippi state line in West Feliciana Parish. The following affidavits tell their own story:

State of Louisiana
Parish of Orleans

Before me, Herman Midlo, a notary public for the above parish and state, appeared Reuben Cole and under oath makes the following statement.

I am an organizer for the Farmers' Educational & Coöperative Union of America. On June 23 I was in West Feliciana Parish and was at the home of Willie Scott and spent the night there.

On June 16, Gordon McIntire mailed a letter to Willie Scott telling him that I would be at his house on June 24. Scott never received the letter; the mob that went to Scott's home on the night of June 24 knew the contents of this letter and expected to find me there. The fact that I arrived at Willie Scott's a day earlier than I expected and left early next morning, June 24, prevented the mob getting me.

Willie Scott has been a active member of the union and is president of Weyanoke Local No. 8. The announced purpose of the mob was to break the union in West Feliciana Parish.

(*Signed*) REUBEN COLE.

Sworn and subscribed this 2nd day of July, 1937.

HERMAN MIDLO,
Notary Public.

State of Louisiana
Parish of Orleans

Before me, Herman Midlo, a notary public for the above parish and state, appeared Irene Scott and under oath makes the following statement.

I have been living on a farm four miles from Weyanoke in the parish of West Feliciana with my husband Willie Scott. We had good farming and had five acres of cotton, twelve acres of corn, peas, two cows, a horse. We started building the union one year ago and had plenty of good results in organizing. We never did do anybody any harm and was only concerned with making a decent living and making the union strong.

Last Thursday night Willie left the house and went to a brother's house to get some corn. I was

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alone and pretty soon I heard a big crowd of men come stomping up on the front porch. They were yelling at me to let them in. They were yelling that they wanted Willie and the white organizer of the union who had been there the day before. I asked them, "Who was it?" I told them I wasn't going to open the door until they told me who they was. They said, "We want that white man. We saw him come by the post office yesterday!" I told them he was gone. They said, "We want to see Willie too. We got a line to hang him and that white man." I told them Willie wasn't home.

So they took an ax and broke down the door off the hinges and come at me and cursed me and hollered at me and said, "We're going to kill you if you don't tell us where Willie Scott and that God-damned white union organizer is." But I wouldn't tell them nothing, so Mr. Tom Woods had a pistol and he took it and knocked me over the head with it. Mr. Tom is a big landowner and owns a big store in Weyanoke. Then Mr. Frank Percy said "Don't beat her up with that pistol too much because then we won't be able to find out where they're at." Mr. Frank Percy owns a big cattle farm and a gin. But Mr. Tom cursed and hit me again and knocked me out of my senses.

Then they went out on the front and was grumbling and mumbling to themselves. They were all white men, sixteen all together I counted and all of them were well-to-do farmers and against the union. I couldn't hear much about what they were talking about but they was saying something about "breaking up that God-damned union."

While they were out there I ran on out the house and hid in the bushes. I could hear them saying "She's gone but she can't go far." So I went in the woods because I wanted to see Willie before he would go back to the house and get killed because they were out to kill him and Mr. Cole. I saw their car in the yard and two more on the road. I was still out of my senses and haven't come to almost yet. Finally I found Willie at a brother's house. I was bleeding bad. We spent the night there and two days later were able to go to New Orleans where I was treated at Charity Hospital.

I know that the reason they did that was because they wanted to break up the union.

(*Signed*)
(her mark) IRENE SCOTT.

Sworn and subscribed this 2nd day of July, 1937.
HERMAN MIDLO,
Notary Public.

State of Louisiana
Parish of Orleans

Before me, Herman Midlo, a notary public for the above parish and state appeared Willie D. Scott and under oath makes the following statement.

I have been a member of the union a year and helped to build it up good. I am the president of the Local No. 8, West Feliciana Parish. And those white men knew it and were out to get me because they don't want a union here. All I know is what my wife told me. She came to the brother's house where I was and she was all full of blood and kind of knocked out of her senses.

My wife and I never did go back to the house. We stayed at the brother's house until Sunday night. On Sunday night we left and went through the woods and through creeks and almost got ourselves drowned and finally came on a road where I met a friend of mine with a car and he brought me a roundabout way to New Orleans.

When we got to New Orleans he took us to somebody's house and we stayed there and then they took my wife to the hospital where they fixed her head.

I have left my home and my crop and can't go back there because if I do they are going to kill me sure. I haven't got any money and I haven't got any place to go and I think the law ought to do something about this because the only thing I did was to be a member of the union.

(*Signed*) WILLIE D. SCOTT.

Sworn and subscribed this 2nd day of July, 1937.
(Notary's Seal.)

(*Signed*) HERMAN MIDLO,
Notary Public.

The case is being submitted to the Senate Civil Liberties Committee by Gordon McIntire, state organizer of the union, in an attempt to establish the constitutional right of union locals to meet openly in this section. We appeal to all labor, church and fraternal bodies to support the union in this struggle.

FARMERS' UNION OF LOUISIANA,
P. O. Box 859, New Orleans, La.

THE STATUS OF THE NEW MASSES

WE are at last in a position to report that the response to our appeal for funds has removed the immediate state of emergency and has assured our continued publication through the summer period.

Our accounts show that we received $7550 through Monday, July 20. The total number of contributions, 812, represented but a small fraction of either our subscription list or our total sales. The amount received is still $2450 short of the $10,000 we asked and required, but we expect the difference to come in shortly. Certain contributions have been promised, but not yet paid, and there are still readers who wanted to send in their contributions but have been unable to do so, for one reason or another.

And then? . . . .

We feel constrained to speak as truthfully, as bluntly, on this aspect of our problem as on others until now. There is no point in evading one fundamental condition about the NEW MASSES:

In a certain sense, it is always in a state of emergency. There is a regular deficit between current income and current expenses, as we stated in our very first appeal six weeks ago. We have no single "angel" and we have no large-scale advertisers. Corresponding to that, we have no insidious outside influences upon our contents. But this political freedom is accompanied by financial stress and strain.

We have a proposal to make which alone can rescue us from frantic appeals and desperate crises, such as the one just past.

The answer is a *regular sustaining fund.*

Our friends must contribute fixed sums on a regular monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. We know that many readers would prefer this arrangement. Let the NEW MASSES be part of your budget, for this mental food makes your life more meaningful and exciting. At the same time, such an arrangement permits us to order our own affairs on a more permanent basis.

That we are not throwing the burden entirely on you is evidenced by the fact that we have increased circulation and advertising revenues while drastically cutting expenses. But a sustaining fund would help us give you a vastly improved magazine, for it would relieve us of the haunting fear of periodic suspension. It would aid us to plan ahead with confidence in the future. This element has been lacking for a long time. It is time that we had it.

Beginning now, therefore, we ask our readers and friends to pledge themselves to send us regular amounts, monthly, quarterly, or annually. We have received single contributions of $500. Could not they be made annual contributions? We have received contributions of $10, $25, $50, $100. Make those quarterly! We have received contributions of $1, $2, $5, $10. Isn't it possible to send us the same sum every month?

We ask for what you can afford. You need not send in cash for the first payment with your pledge. Just tell us how much you want to send regularly, how often you want to send it, and when you want to begin. Of course, send in your first contribution with your pledge if you are able to do so. We will use Between Ourselves to give you regular reports on the progress of this sustaining fund.

Fill out and send in the attached coupon —*now!*—THE EDITORS.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The story of a revolutionist—The mulatto in a novel—Streamlining the "scientific" deity

NICHOLAS OSTROVSKI'S stirring and deeply-moving novel* is a remarkable example of writing as a form of social struggle. The author, after a life of active revolutionary work, was struck down by a slow paralysis, the after-effect of a spinal wound he received while fighting in the Red Army. Unable to do his usual work and unwilling to "go to the rear," to be hospitalized out of active life, he set himself the deliberate task of writing a good novel. Few men started with greater handicaps: lack of background, even plain illiteracy had to be overcome. Before the work had gone far, Ostrovski became blind, yet even this did not defeat him. Scrawling, dictating, writing from memory, he kept going, and *The Making of a Hero* was written. "The iron ring was broken, and once again, with a fresh weapon, he was in the active ranks and a living man."

Only the concluding chapters of the book tell the story of Korchagin (Ostrovski), the writer. The larger part of this substantial novel is a story of years of revolution, of the ebb and flow of the Bolshevik tide in the Ukraine. The German invasion, the activities of the semi-bandit hordes of the Petliura counter-revolutionaries, the Polish invasion, all test the will and endurance of a people. Mass movement and individual destiny balance with the skill which the Soviet cinema and literature both demonstrate so effectively.

Although in emphasis autobiography, the book embraces a wide variety of Ukrainian types: railway workers, kitchen workers, organizers, Y.C.L.ers, cavalrymen, and other fighters, nurses, manual and professional workers of many kinds. Among them, the women are even better realized than the men, and few who read the novel will forget Rita Oustinovich, who in spite of her "khaki tunic, tightly belted at the waist" is a real woman, or Tanya Kutzam who meets Korchagin in his last days and helps him with her developing awareness of Soviet life. Yet the men, too, are real and alive—from the confused railway worker, Artem (Korchagin's brother), to Zhoukhrai, heroic and disciplined organizer of the Communist Party.

Towards the end of the book a most effective passage tells how thousands of workers joined the party as an answer to Lenin's death. In this mass gesture of loyalty, the backward Artem is caught up. Before a meeting of workers he tells the story of his life, as others do—simply and sincerely. He ends, "I've been looking over my life, and I see what's lacking in it. It's not enough to defend things, we have to go into it like one family in place of Lenin, to make the Soviet world as permanent as iron. It's our duty to become Bolsheviks—why, isn't it our own party?"

And it is in this spirit, with a really iron determination, that Ostrovski wrote his novel. His recent death is a genuine loss to Soviet letters and gives particular poignancy to his effort.

MILLEN BRAND.

*THE MAKING OF A HERO, *by Nicholas Ostrovski. Translated by Alec Brown. E. P. Dutton & Co.* $2.50.

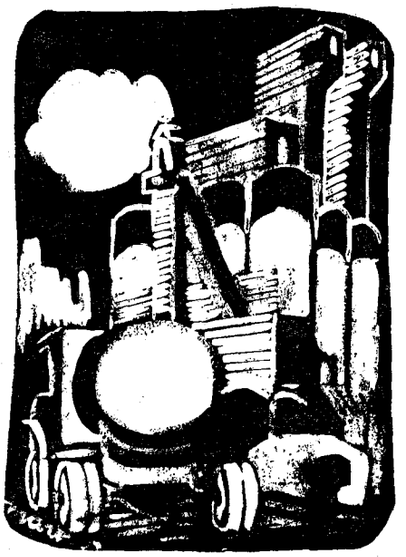
Between White and Black

CHILDREN OF STRANGERS, *by Lyle Saxon. Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.50.*

THE tragic plight of the mulatto, caught between the productive power of the Negro and the ruling power of the white man, is the central theme of this first novel by Lyle Saxon who is already known as the author of some charming short stories as well as of two books dealing with Louisiana life.

The theme is familiar; the folk *mores* of the Louisiana hinterland that lend good color to this thriftily etched narrative have been recorded previously by Mr. Saxon, Thad St. Martin, and other writers. But out of the labyrinth of the four castes—white gentry, mulatto, poor white, and Negro—that constitute the real background of the story, the mulatto girl Famie emerges as a pivotal character of poignant and almost heroic quality.

In her consuming urge to tread the forbidden borders of the white world, as typified by the Randolphs and the two thousand acres of their Yucca plantation cultivated by Negro sharecroppers, Famie differs from the rest of her kinsfolk who form the isolated French-mulatto community that was established on Cane River by Grandpère Augustin, slaveholder and patriarch, towards the end of the eighteenth century. This difference lies mostly in the fact that the blossoming orphan girl Famie exercises conscious will in her acceptance of the deep-rooted longing that cannot be stilled. Unlike her light-hearted cousin Nita who, in exchange for a new dress, offers herself to the "white trash" clerk at the plantation store, Famie's surrender to the bright-haired stranger whom she has discovered camping across the river marks the full tide of her joyous meeting with the precious white force that sings in her blood.



Martin

And when her lover who proves to be an escaped convict is killed, she turns to her child —"so lovely white," white like the children, the walls, the woodwork, the floor-matting at the big plantation house itself—to recapture the illusion of having entered that coveted white world of power and dominance. It is a short-lived and tragic illusion, to which all former bonds are necessarily sacrificed. Her subsequent marriage to the pathetic mulatto Numa, who was indirectly responsible for the shooting of her lover, is a barren one and ends with the death of the exhausted mulatto farmer from tuberculosis. Gradually all the remaining ties that still hold Famie to her in-between caste are swept away. Furniture, heirlooms, and finally her house and land are sold to the white gentry in whose household she is soon classed with the menial Negro help.

But she has achieved her goal: her boy Joel has been reared and educated as a white man. This crowning triumph, won through bitter sacrifice, loses all its meaning when Joel ruthlessly abandons his mother to definitely "pass" into the white world; and she accepts the offer of the Negro field-hand who has long begged her to come and live with him.

There is logic in Famie's ultimate union with the powerful but humble Henry who, through his friendship with the plantation owner's sensitive brother, had also briefly violated the taboo on the white man's control. Whatever positive social implications may be contained in this allegorical union of Negro and mulatto are lost, however, in the author's failure to throw greater light on Famie's acceptance of a place beside the oppressed and illiterate Negro sharecropper. This would make a telling final chapter.

ABEL PLENN.

Brand-New God

BEYOND HUMANISM, *by Charles Hartshorne. Willett, Clark & Co. $2.50.*

PROFESSOR HARTSHORNE presents the very latest model of the "scientific" deity introduced at the beginning of the decade by Jeans and Eddington. It is to be noted that this deity in his newest phase has mellowed considerably, for whereas his first advocates praised him chiefly as a mathematician, Harts-

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horne is drawn to him by the more traditional aspects of deity: infinite sympathy and loving-kindness. But though this god is himself less of a scientist than that of Jeans, Hartshorne is no less insistent that he has arrived at a knowledge of this god by strictly scientific principles.

Structurally, this philosophic work adds little to the "scientific monisms" of Whitehead and Haldane, which is to say that Hartshorne's system is in effect as dualistic as the others. All of these recent "philosophies of science" set up hierarchies which correspond roughly to the developmental patterns posited by Marxism, but all of them are negated by the lack of any real dialectical continuity. Hartshorne, however, sells out his system a little more explicitly by stating that the dualism which Paul Elmer More and others claimed as a necessary basis for ethics is adequately afforded by his own "societism," as he calls it, for "the cells and molecules in the body are so vastly inferior, as sympathetic creatures, to conscious imaginative human beings, not to mention the cosmic mind, that, if we wish to call the latter spirits and the former non-spiritual beings, we speak truth, provided we do not claim an absolutely infinite difference between the two types of being."

The name "societism" fails to disguise the weakness of this and other similar philosophies. Because they base their entire reasoning on the new confusion in the physical sciences, and refuse even to admit the existence of a science of society, these thinkers find themselves unable to develop any fresh, socially useful concepts, and fall back on a stale theology, claiming it is new because they have just recently decided to go back to it. By going "beyond" the humanism of Russell and Santayana, Professor Hartshorne has arrived at the really pernicious humanism of More and Babbitt.

RICHARD GREENLEAF.

The Revolutionary Spark

THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION: 1825, *by Anatole G. Mazour. University of California Press. $4.*

AS a doctor's dissertation this book is exceptionally readable and pertinent. The author is a member of the Russian intelligentsia, who have always valued the social significance of scholarship. The acceptance of his thesis by an American university is symptomatic of our changing times.

The uprising of December 14, 1825 was, in the words of one of its leaders, "a spark from which the flame was to burst forth." These words served as a motto for Lenin's periodical, *The Spark,* at the very beginning of the early twentieth century. In itself that uprising appeared to be a bloody farce, instigated by a handful of young aristocratic dreamers, and paid for with imprisonment, exile, execution, and thirty years of a most rigid police regime. It was the reverberation of the cannon of Nicholas I that mattered. For almost a hundred years the message of the Decembrists kept the conscience of Russia awake. The poet Rileyev, one of the hanged leaders, predicted

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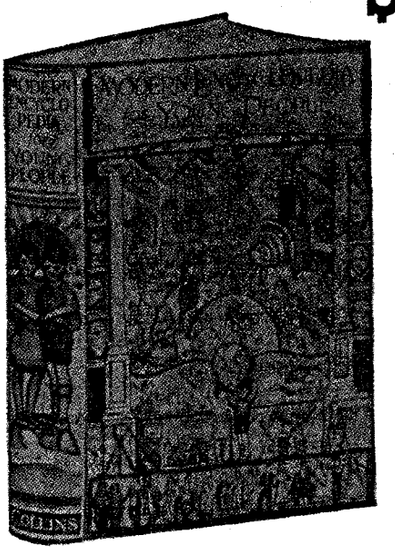

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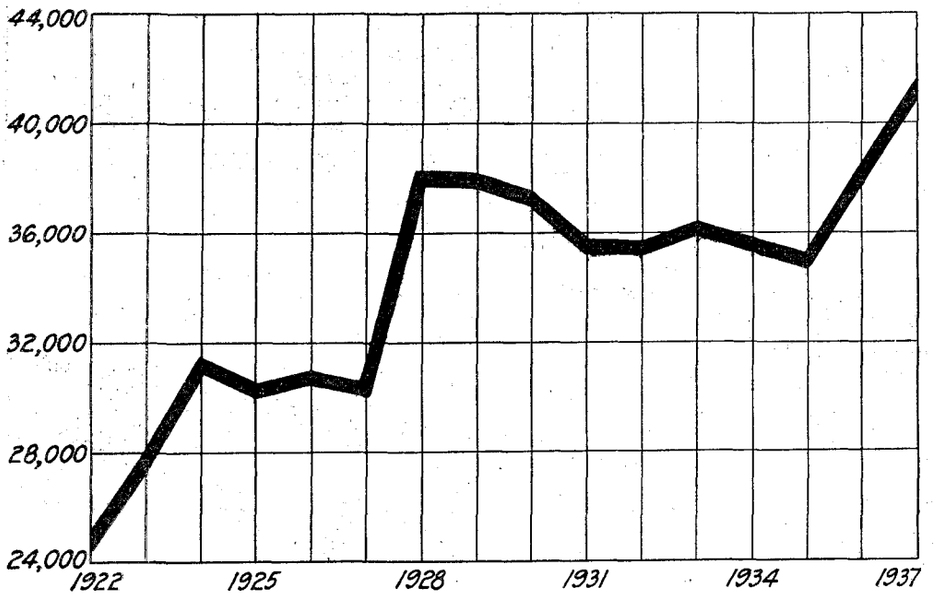

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Although *The Nation* began its career as a commentator on public affairs as early as 1865, never before has its present circulation been equalled.

Principal credit belongs, of course, to those who write for *The Nation.* The partial list of contributors which appears here includes many of the most important figures in the ranks of progressive thought today. No wonder reactionaries who want to know what the other side thinks, as well as intellectually alert left wingers, turn to *The Nation!*

Fortunately, the curve of circulation continues to rise. Every advance means a victory over the forces which oppose an American social system that makes sense. For that reason, above all others, we thank those who have contributed to our support, by subscribing or purchasing single copies, and now extend this invitation to those who have not read *The Nation* recently:

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The Nation has always pointed with pride to its list of contributors. The names which appear below, however, comprise a list which seems to excel that of any other issued by *The Nation* for it includes an unusually large number of the leaders of progressive thought in America and Europe. Yet, all of these writers have contributed to *The Nation* during the past few months and will contribute, we hope, during the months ahead when the crucial events bound to come will require, for a thorough understanding from the progressive point of view, the most authoritative interpretation available.

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Carleton Beals
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that their certain death would serve as an example of "daring." The example was acknowledged and revered by the best Russian revolutionary thinkers, from Alexander Herzen to Lenin.

Dr. Mazour approaches his subject as a historian. He, therefore, treats the Decembrist movement not as an isolated phenomenon, but as a link in the chain of evolutionary events. He describes the early part of the nineteenth century in Russia, economically and politically, and shows the growth of discontent in the liberal circles of society at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars. One is tempted to draw an analogy between Alexander I and Woodrow Wilson. Both were hailed as saviors of democracy, both stirred up rosy expectations among gullible liberals, both caused in the end disenchantment and heartache. Even Wilson's pet, the League of Nations, recalls Alexander's darling, the Holy Alliance. The Russians had their counterpart of the "tired liberals," except that these were kept stirred up by a few vital men, like Pestel and Muravyov, or like Pierre Bezukhov in *War and Peace*.

Dr. Mazour is better at stating facts than at interpreting them and drawing conclusions. His chapter called "Conclusion" is, indeed, weak, vague, and in places inaccurate. To say, for example, that the two chief aims of the Decembrists were the abolition of serfdom and the limitation of autocracy is to ignore the far more radical and republican platform of Colonel Pestel, whose Southern Group is treated at length in the text. The occurrence of the insurrection on December 14 gave the movement, retrospectively, the name "Decembrist." But to speak of "the formation of the Decembrist Society" is like referring to the Chicago martyrs as "the Haymarket Society." Though a historian, Dr. Mazour lacks the clarity and unity of a well digested point of view.

The factual side of the book is in itself extremely instructive. For one thing, one learns how not to attempt a revolution. The Decembrists represented leaders, but they had no one to lead. The masses were silent and ignored, and the privates who followed their officers to the Senate Square had no idea of what they were risking their lives for. About a century later the Russian privates forced their officers to march them against the czar, and the masses backed them actively. In 1925 the martyrdom of the Decembrists was commemorated gratefully by a victorious people.

ALEXANDRE DERORE.

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badly-lit police precinct station, waited and wondered what the outcome will be, it is hard to understand the relief that accompanies the arrival of a lawyer from the International Labor Defense. For the I.L.D. attorney will see to it that bail is raised and that civil rights are guarded.

The everyday, undramatic task of protecting civil liberties never ends. And through the small cases, the I.L.D. prepares for such important tests as Scottsboro, Gallup, Harlan, Chicago. Wherever workers are faced with terror or oppression, wherever their democratic rights are violated, the International Labor Defense protects them.

Yet despite the I.L.D.'s vigilance, workers are framed and sentenced to jail by biased courts on trumped-up charges—often for long sentences, for a year, five years, twenty years, sometimes for life. They leave behind them wives and children. The I.L.D. Prisoners' Relief Fund is usually the only aid that families of class-war prisoners receive. Though necessarily small, such help means comfort and reassurance to those unjustly imprisoned; it means the protection of abandoned families at least from starvation. In addition, literature sent by the I.L.D. to those in jail, gifts of food, the small comforts that the International Labor Defense distributes, bring courage to labor's martyrs, and a knowledge that they are not forgotten, not deserted.

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It is a stirring record, this statement of what the International Labor Defense has accomplished. No one who desires to hold fast to democracy can read and comprehend *Equal Justice* without applauding the I.L.D. *Equal Justice* is a book for all who wish to know what is happening in America, for all who wish to learn how they can participate in the all-important struggle to preserve the American tradition of tolerance, liberty, and justice.

BRUCE MINTON.

★

Recently Recommended Books

The Negro Genius, by Benjamin Brawley. Dodd, Mead. $2.50.

The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism, by Robert A. Brady. Viking. $3.

Labor Conditions in Western Europe, by J. Kucynski. International. $1.50.

The Outward Room, by Millen Brand. Simon & Schuster. $1.25.

The Letters of Lenin, translated and edited by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie. Harcourt, Brace. $4.

After the Seizure of Power (Selected Works of V. I. Lenin. Vol. VII). International. Reg. $2.75. Pop. $2.

The Paris Commune of 1871, by Frank Jellinek. Oxford University Press. $3.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Freedom and frustration in movie-making—A "pink slip" art show

THE atmosphere of a museum of antique curios pervades the theater as you watch *Gobsek* (Amkino), Balzac's story of a ruthless usurer, unfold before you. Director Konstantin Eggert has shrewdly contrived to infuse the whole film with an air of musty sterility which is by way of being secondary comment on the main theme: the inhuman rapaciousness of the money-lender. As a study in character, *Gobsek* has much of the quality of wry caricature to be found in Daumier's drawings, and the slow pace, deliberate talk, meticulous precisian acting, and minutely detailed make-up combine to produce the effect of a lecture on an insect lifelessly impaled on a pin in a specimen-case. Which was, no doubt, exactly what the makers of the film, as well as the original author, intended.

And the contrast it provides with such other Soviet films as *The Thirteen, Chapayev, Storm Over Asia,* and a host of others is just about the contrast between certain dominant features of life in early nineteenth-century France and life in the first workers' republic. Small wonder, then, that from the standpoint of sheer emotional impact the Soviet Union's films on modern themes, full of crashing conflict of classes in a death struggle, can stir us far beyond such cinema as *Gobsek.*

The point about *Gobsek* as it bears on Soviet cinema, however, is that it proves conclusively again that the effectiveness of movie-making in the U.S.S.R. is not merely its utilization of vital themes, but rather, that while using themes that sweep through the modern world like whirlwinds, the studios of the Soviet Union bring into play a mastery of technique that wrings the last drop of effectiveness from the material at hand. *Gobsek* is a memorable example of that mastery.

Hollywood's limitations lie, of course, in the material handled, so that the technical virtuosity of the American studios again and again can bring forth nothing but a feeble result. The film *John Meade's Woman,* for example, was a really exciting effort to break through this limitation, and with its documentary use of the dust-storm and its portrayal of farmers on the march against the landowner reached a level of vitality achieved by few American films. But the compulsory confusions of ideology and the dominance of a sappy love story brought it in the end to nothing. Even when it essays a straight propaganda film in terms of its own viewpoint, Hollywood's pet taboos enter to cripple effectiveness, as witness the current *The Devil Is Driving* (Columbia), which attempts to deliver a polemic against the practice of automobile driving while drunk. The material available is such as to curdle anyone's blood, which is about the most advantageous basis for driving a lesson home. But what we have here is the unhappy marriage of another sappy love story with the menace of death at the crossroads, the discomfort of which is all too clearly reflected in the unease with which Joan Perry and Richard Dix handle their roles. Mr. Dix is put in the nauseating fix of being reformed, through Love, so that he becomes a crusader against reckless driving instead of a fixer of traffic-violation cases. Despite everything the Hollywood formula can do to prevent it, however, the essential material of the film is so powerful that the lesson gets across.

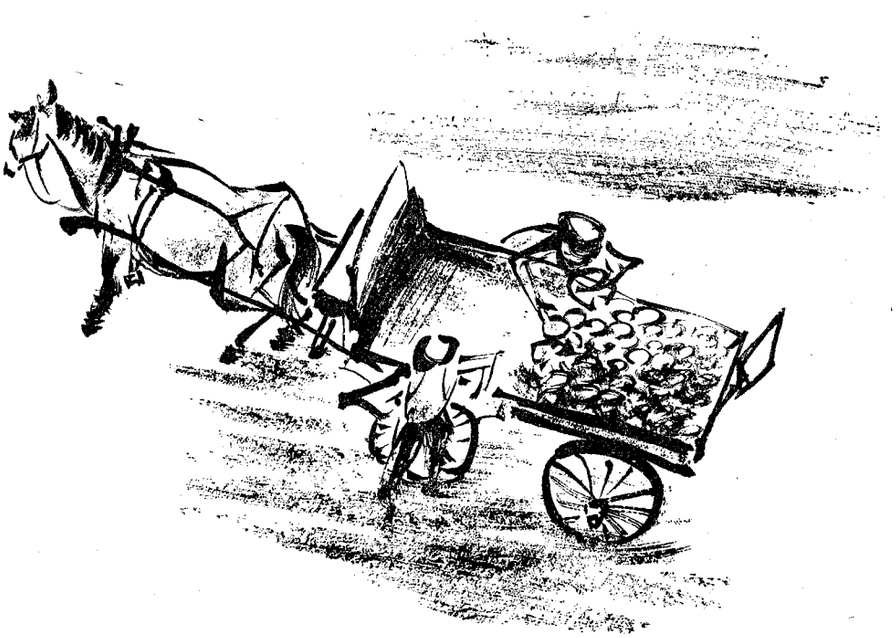
This dilemma of Hollywood, of course, drives intelligent writers and directors almost nuts in their effort to produce something resembling entertainment for adult minds. One of the few ways they have been able to succeed is in spoof stuff such as the Marx brothers purvey (but *A Day at the Races* showed the narrow confines of that formula) and, in slightly different vein, the current *Super-Sleuth* (R.K.O.-Radio), in which Jack Oakie muddles through to a solution of a crime only because everyone else is slightly more thick-witted than he is, which is saying quite a lot. Bad pistol shooting, dumb detecting, and other antitheses of the usual Hollywoodian murder-mystery-film virtues are combined to produce a pleasantly fresh and funny film with a fair body of satire which is directed (since Hollywood dares satirize no one else) largely at Hollywood itself. Mr. Oakie is very good, as usual, and gets excellent seconding from Ann Sothern, whom we always suspected of having a nimble wit, and Eduardo Cianelli, our favorite bad man, who is really awful in *Super-Sleuth.*

For the sake of the record: Paramount's *Midnight Madonna* makes as its contributions (1) a rival for Shirley Temple in the person of Kitty Clancy, (2) a comment on the Court question by showing that judges are sometimes out of touch with the people and that one way to cure them of this fault is to have them kidnaped by a tough guy with a real sweet nature. ROBERT WHITE.

THE FINE ARTS

ON July 15, almost three thousand W.P.A. workers on three cultural projects, among them many artists from the Federal Art Project, lost their jobs. The enterprising A.C.A. Gallery immediately organized a Pink Slip Exhibition to demonstrate to the public the fine quality of the work of these artists. Open on July 19, it features sixty-six painters and seven sculptors. Many of these artists have wide reputations. The standard of their work suggests that the wholesale slashing of jobs has been done without consideration of merit, or on the basis of need. Many of these artists support families and dependents on their meager wages; their plight is serious. It almost appears as if the ill-fated recipients of pink slips were chosen by drawing tickets out of a hat.

Among those most discriminated against are the Japanese artists, who automatically fall under the alien clause, although they have lived here for years, and cannot, despite their willingness, ever become American citizens. The existence of an outmoded law which prevents the Japanese from claiming citizenship was brought to public attention when Yasuo



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Kuniyoshi, well known Japanese-American painter, was barred in 1936 from the Municipal show and only admitted after mass protest of fellow-artists.

Included in the present exhibition are three Japanese artists, Chuzo Tamotzu, Eitaro Ishigaki, and C. Yamasaki. Certainly, Tamotzu's *House on the Meadow* is one of the finest canvases in the show. As a landscape painter, he displays an extraordinary sensitivity to the American scene, in particular to the backyards and suburbs of New York. He has enriched our romantic tradition by his Japanese technique. Ishigaki, represented by the known canvas, *South, U.S.A.*, has been working for over a year on monumental murals for the Harlem courthouse. His dismissal leaves incomplete this authentic record of American history.

The exhibit also includes the work of Joseph Stella, internationally known painter, whose series of Brooklyn Bridge is reproduced in countless periodicals and art histories. Harry Gottlieb, president of the Artists' Union, one of the first to be dismissed, has sent his colored lithograph of *Bootleg Miners* recently shown in his one-man exhibit. Ben Zion contributes a canvas of rich pattern and texture called *In the Barn.* Jacob Kainen, critic and painter, has sent a subtly colored landscape *Wreckers.*

One of the most provocative canvases is *What Price Glory,* which satirically portrays an elderly woman in the clutches of a permanent-waving machine. Reminiscent in composition of Otto Dix's *Man with the Glass Globe,* it is handled in the dry stylized fashion of late Byzantine mosaics, the figure severely frontal, the curling pins imposed like a decorative crown above the ancient disillusioned face. There are so many canvases well worth lingering over, among them John Cunning's *Roadside Market,* Mischa Reznikoff's composition of sea, nets, and shells; Gregorio Prestopino's lurid *Decoration Day;* Max Schnitzler's landscape and Anna Mantell's *Theater No. 2,* but space, unfortunately, does not permit discussion of them all.

Among the well-known black and white artists dismissed from the graphic section are Elizabeth Olds, Fritz Eichenberg, Clara Mahl, and E. H. Sherman, whose line drawings of musicians are handled with great acumen.

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The seven dismissed sculptors exhibiting are Claude J. Crowe, Robert Cronbach, whose fantastic satires are well known to NEW MASSES readers, Ernest Guteman, Joseph Konzal, Elizabeth Mangor, Thomas Mims, and Hirsch Zitter. In particular, Crowe's two compact female figures, small as they are, have monumental solidity and design.

Altogether this is a show which holds its own with the "New Horizons in American Art," which the Museum of Modern Art offered the public as the record of the achievements of the first year of the Federal Art Project. The jury which assembled this present exhibition was composed of C. D. Bachelder, Isabel Walker Soule, Stuart Davis, Bennett Buck, Harry Gottlieb, Elizabeth Olds, and Nahun Tschacbasov.

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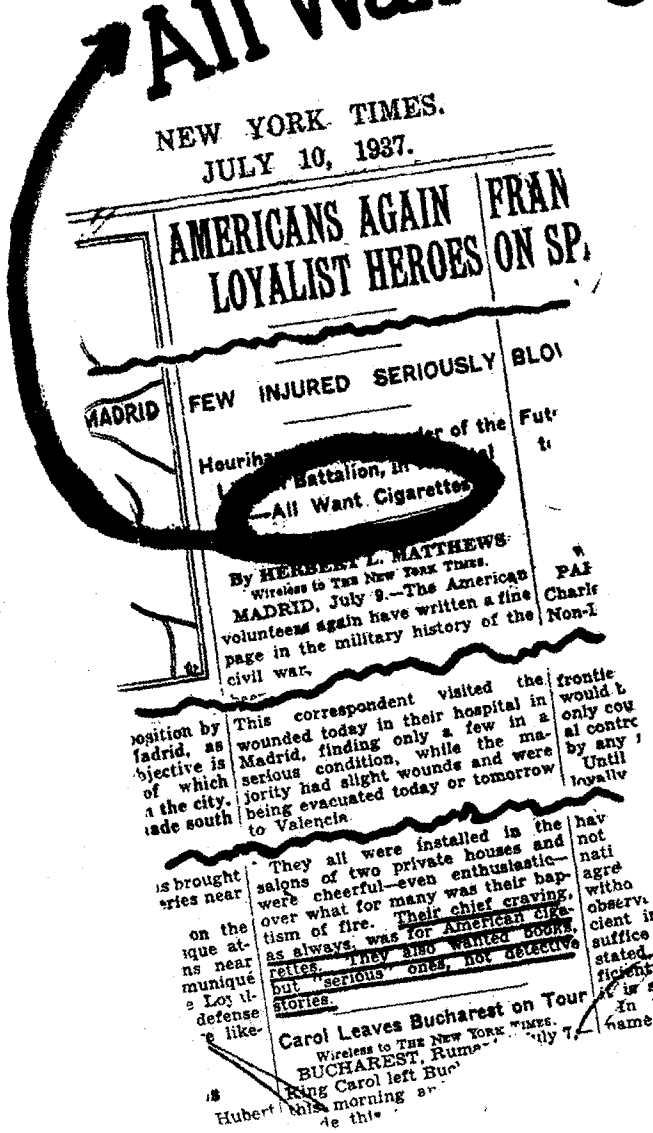
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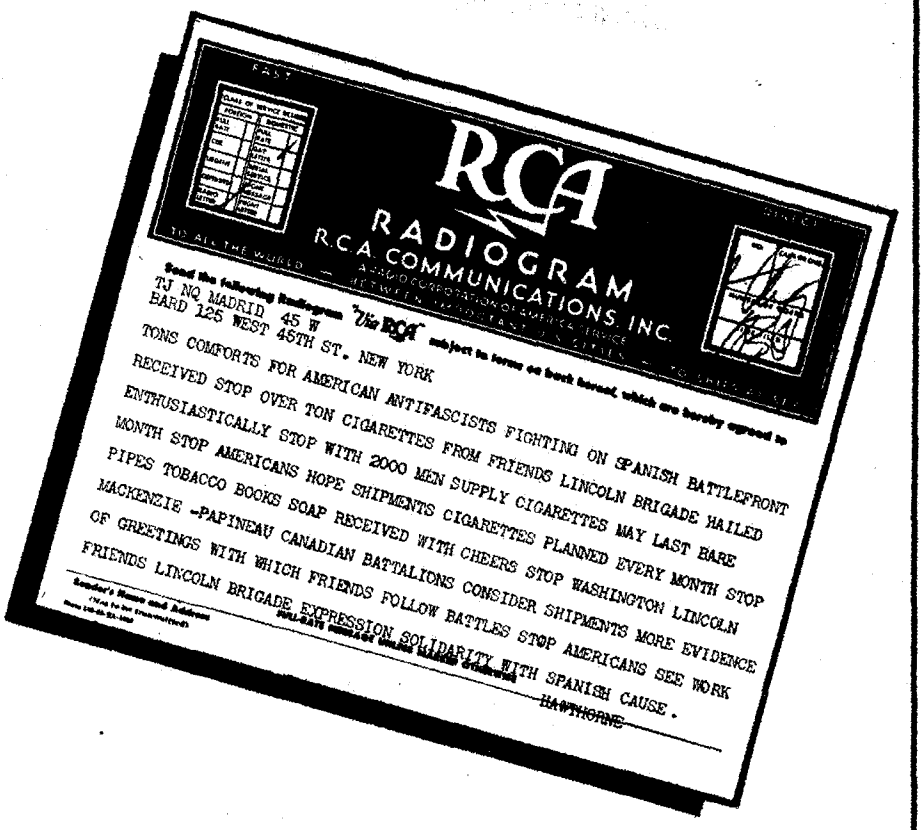
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$50.00 buys 1 pack of cigarettes every day for a month for 50 men.
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